



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

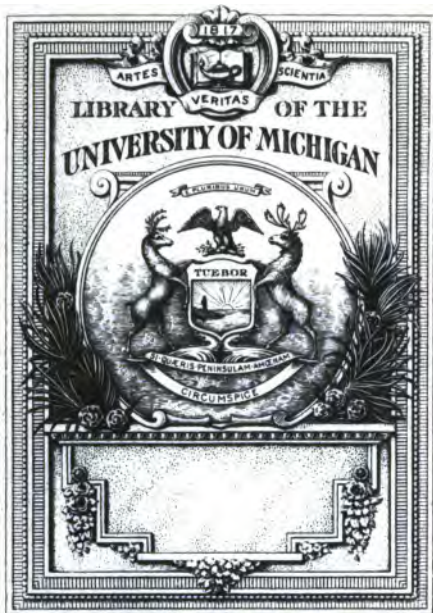
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

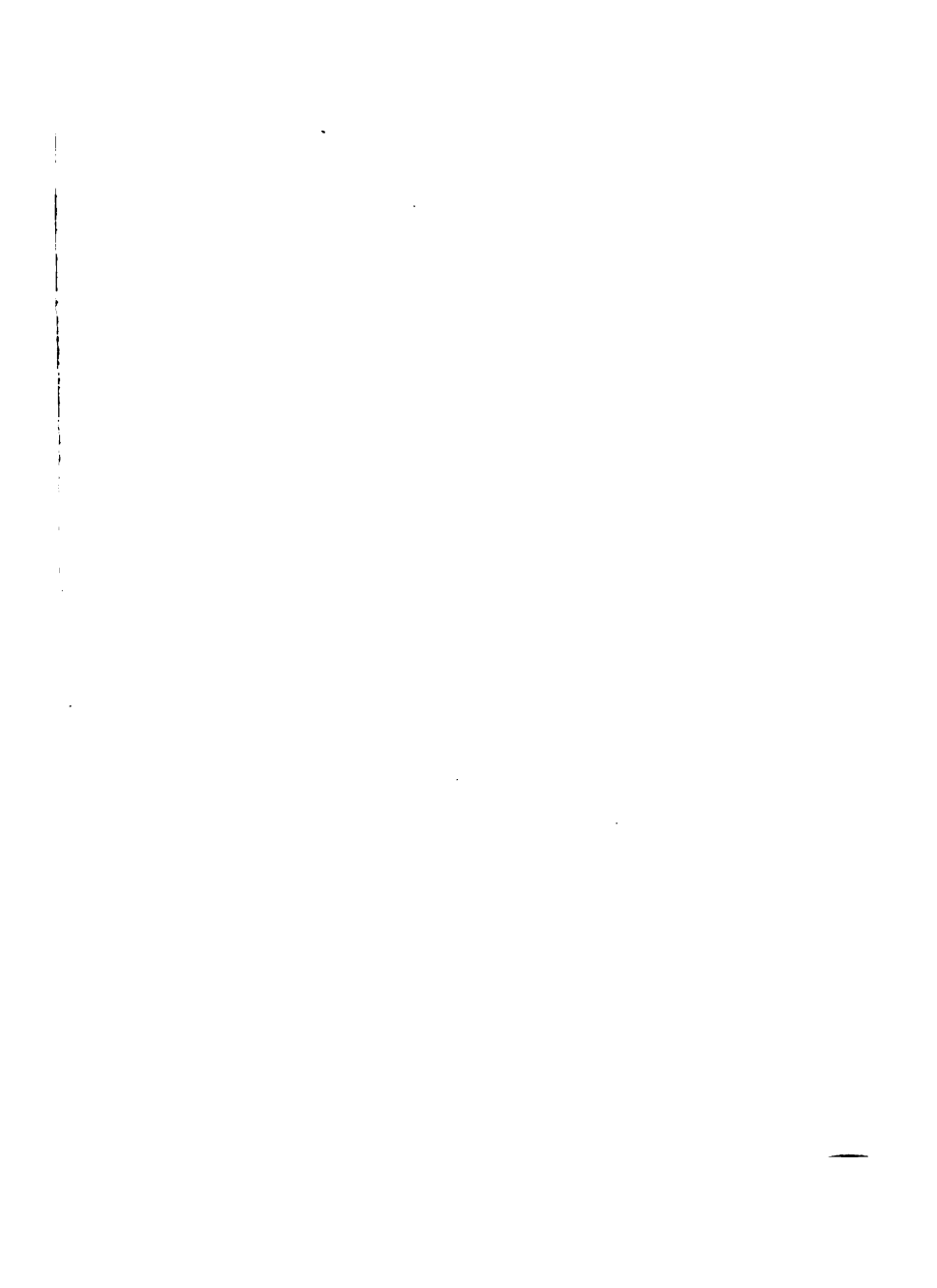
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

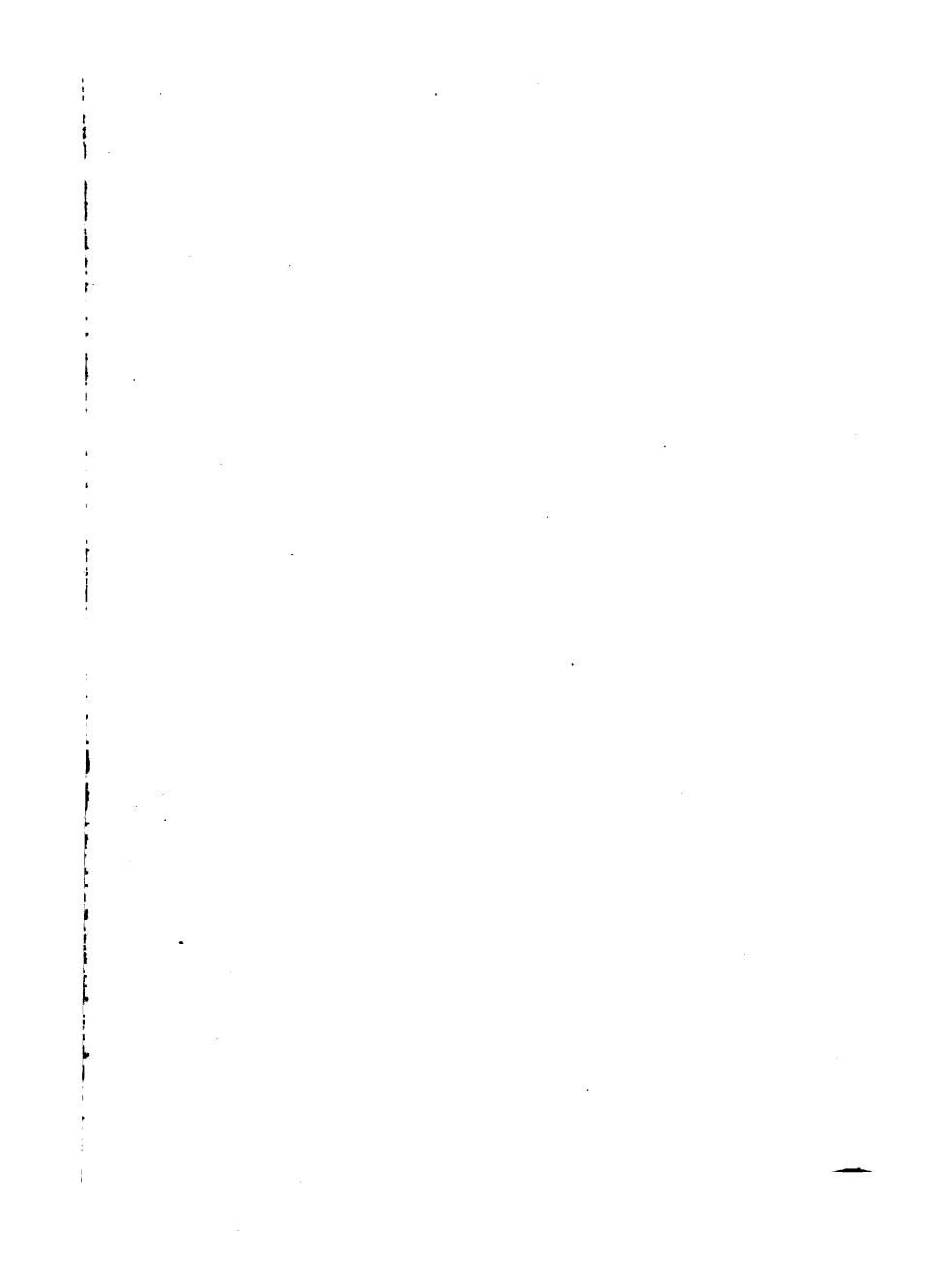


IN MEMORY OF
WILLIAM TINKER HOLLANDS
OF THE
CLASS OF 1913

Vertical line on the left side of the page.









TIMELY ARRIVAL OF LION BEN.—Page 48.

ELM ISLAND STORIES.

THE

BOY FARMERS OF ELM ISLAND.

BY

REV. ELIJAH KELLOGG,

**AUTHOR OF "SPARTACUS TO THE GLADIATORS," "LION BEN," "CHARLIE
BELL," "THE YOUNG SHIP-BUILDERS," "THE HARD-SCRABBLE,"
THE "PLEASANT COVE STORIES," THE "WHIS-
PERING PINE SERIES," ETC.**

ILLUSTRATED.

BOSTON:

LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS.

828
K3204 bn
1897

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1869, by
LEE AND SHEPARD,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

Copyright, 1897, by Elijah Kellogg.

All Rights Reserved.

THE BOY FARMERS OF ELM ISLAND.

Gift of
Wm C. Hollands
5-7-52

P R E F A C E.

IN this volume we have returns of the ventures sent by the boys and others to the West Indies, in the Ark, in the form of molasses, sugar, and coffee.

Putting these articles into the hands of Fred Williams—a boy of about their own age, and a playmate—to dispose of on commission, they both excite him to effort, and develop in him a bias and capacity for trade which decide his future employment and success in life.

It also describes the improvements made on the island, the raising, the wrestle, and the discomfiture of a man of muscle who essayed to beard the lion in his den; the first flowers that spring from the virgin soil to add beauty to the wilderness; and the advent of the birds, who came to build and sing among the branches.

The Lion, being under the necessity of spending the summer on the water, commits Elm Island to the care of Charlie, his adopted son, John, his brother, and Fred Williams, with very general directions to burn, plant, take care of the crops, and fall trees for a future burn. To the confidence thus reposed, which brings out all there is in them, the boys nobly responded. Beneath this genial influence we perceive the origin and growth of tendencies which shape their after life. Thus left to themselves, they not only perform what might reasonably be expected of them, but rack their powers of invention to devise other means of benefiting their employer and friend, accomplishing such results, that, on his return, he gives them a long holiday, which they spend in such adventures as the sea, shore, and forest of a wild country offer. The harvesting of the first crop ever grown on that wild spot is full of pleasurable excitement, being succeeded by a husking, upon which occasion the "Lion" publicly declares his temperance principles, to the great disgust of his father and nearly all present.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. GETTING UNDER WAY FOR MARKET.	9
II. CAPTAIN RHINES SURPRISES MR. WELCH.	20
III. THE BOYS IN COUNCIL.	27
IV. HELPING YOUR NEIGHBOR.	43
V. THE EFFECT OF THIS SUDDEN INFLUX OF WEALTH.	55
VI. CHARLIE MAKING SUGAR.	64
VII. BEN AND THE WILD GEESE.	73
VIII. A WELCOME GUEST.	90
IX. THE RAISING.	125
X. JOEL RICKER AND THE LION OF ELM ISLAND.	133
XI. A CLAP OF THUNDER IN A CLEAR SKY.	149
XII. THREE YOUNG FARMERS.	160
XIII. THE BOYS SETTLE WITH FRED WILLIAMS.	177
XIV. THE ISLAND GARDEN.	192
XV. FRED DIDN'T THINK.	204

CHAPTER	PAGE
XVI. THE BIRDS COME TO ELM ISLAND.	216
XVII. RACE BETWEEN THE BIRCH AND TWILIGHT.	229
XVIII. POOR SALLY DINSMORE.	237
XIX. A NOVEL PET.	248
XX. HOW BEN REWARDED THE BOYS.	258
XXI. AN INLAND ADVENTURE.	270
XXII. MR. WELCH AND UNCLE ISAAC.	284

THE
BOY FARMERS OF ELM ISLAND.

CHAPTER I.

GETTING UNDER WAY FOR MARKET.

To those who may take up this volume of the Elm Island stories, without having read the previous one, with which it is more intimately connected, we would observe, that in that is chronicled the success of Lion Ben while endeavoring to make his lumber carry itself to a foreign market, by building it into a vast raft, protected from the action of winds and waves by the partial framework of a vessel, through which, nevertheless, the tide ebbed and flowed, and rendered somewhat more buoyant by empty casks, which were also intended to compensate for the soaking of the lumber. She was named the "Ark," in relation to the miscellaneous nature of her cargo, which consisted, in addition to lumber, of live stock of vari-

ous kinds, and produce carried as ventures by her crew, and was rigged into a fore-and-aft schooner.

In this novel craft, the adventurers, though encountering severe gales of wind, reached Cuba without loss. There she was broken up and sold, with her cargo. From the proceeds Captain Rhines bought a brig, called the Congress, that was ashore at Havana, got her off, repaired and loaded her with molasses, sugar, and coffee, and came home in her.

After giving an entertainment to his neighbors on board, he is now about to seek a market for her cargo. As he contemplates the possibility of selling the vessel as well as cargo, he is accompanied by a fishing schooner, carrying a cargo of lumber to pay expenses, that they may thus have a conveyance home in the event of sale. The crew had bought West India produce with the proceeds of their ventures; and the boys, who had also sent out ventures, had done the same. These were all on board the Congress; and the boys, who were of course greatly interested, were going to accompany the brig, in the schooner.

Tuesday morning the wind was north-east, and they made sail. Joe Griffin, Charlie, and John went in the Perseverance.

The schooner got under way first, and stood out, with a good breeze.

"We shall beat them, Joe," said John, as the Congress came slowly out under her topsails; "I know we shall."

"Don't be too sure of that, my boy," said Joe; "she hasn't got under way yet, but we've got all the canvas we can spread."

The Perseverance continued to gain on the brig, while the crew of the latter were getting the anchor on the bow, insomuch that, notwithstanding Joe's declaration, both the boys began to entertain strong hopes of winning the race, as the brig was now far astern.

"There goes the main course and maintop gallant-sail!" said Joe. "Now, youngsters, you'll tell another story."

The brig now evidently began to gain; they could see her much more distinctly, and were soon able to distinguish Isaac as he went aloft to loose the main-royal. To these other sails were soon added, and the Congress, spreading a large breadth of canvas in proportion to her hull, gradually overhauled, and at length passed them.

"If we were on a wind," said Joe, "we would hold her good play; but there's too great a differ-

ence between sixty and two hundred and fifty tons, dead afore it."

I believe the first thing Sally thought of, when she heard the Congress had come, was, that she would now have wool, and flax, and a loom of her own, as she had sent by Captain Rhines to get the reeds in Portland, or Boston. But Charlie cherished other thoughts, and he brought the tortoise shell, that Isaac had given him, to have it manufactured into a comb for his mother, but had never lisp'd a word about tortoise shell to her.

As they came up with Portland Head, the wind hauled more to the north, and the moment the vessels were brought on the wind, the sharp pinkstern began to gain on the brig, and, when the Congress came to anchor in Hog Island Roads (this anchorage having retained that appellation till the present time), was not far astern.

The captain found, on going ashore, that molasses was in good demand, and bore a good price, as, even at that early day, distilleries were established there; but he found it difficult to sell his cargo for cash. The trade of Portland was with the West Indies altogether by barter; they sent lumber and fish, hoops and shooks, and exchanged them for molasses. It may seem strange to some of our

young readers that Captain Rhines should expect to find purchasers for so large a cargo in Portland at that period; but even then there was no lack of capital to make the purchase, but they preferred to turn their lumber for molasses, and save the money for other goods, for which they could not exchange lumber.

We must not suppose that, even in those days, all were patriots, and gave all they had to the service of their country, or that, in the general poverty and depression of the times, all were poor alike. Human nature was then just what it is now; there were men of wealth scattered here and there through the country; commissaries and sutlers cheated the government and soldiers, and made money out of the miseries of others, as they have since; some had become wealthy by secretly supplying the enemy with provisions, others by the rise in stocks of goods laid in previous to the war, and for which they obtained war prices; some by running the gantlet of the British cruisers, and smuggling lumber into Spanish ports; some had accumulated large fortunes by privateering, and yet others, who had become rich by the contraband trade to the Spanish West Indies, of which we spoke in the previous volume, and too

cautious either to lend their money to the government or invest it in any way, held on to it, and thus were in a condition to do business to advantage when the war was over. People of this sort, few in number, to be sure, were like unfrequent stars in a cloudy sky, scattered throughout all the principal seaports of our coasts from Maine to Georgia. They also had a fashion of clubbing together to effect a large purchase, and then dividing it among themselves.

In respect to price, it must be remembered that, in times of the greatest depressions, molasses, and even coffee and sugar, always bore a good price, for people would have them, if it was in their power to obtain them. Christophe, the Governor of Hayti, is reported to have said,—

“Hang up a bag of coffee in the mouth of hell, and an American would be found to go after it.”

In New England, molasses was the great, and, in many parts, the only, luxury. Fishing was pursued to a great extent, and every fishing-vessel carried twelve gallons. No logging-camp was without it; and the bear, who had American tastes, often scaled the roof of the camp to obtain his share of the luxury. It was distilled into new rum, and also, with sugar, sweetened the rum, gin,

black-strap, flip, and punch, vast quantities of which were drunk.

Generally, throughout the country, molasses, called "long sweetening," was used to sweeten the coffee, being boiled in. It entered into the composition of Indian bread, Indian pudding, baked beans, was used as a sauce upon hasty pudding, and was the chief ingredient in that crowning luxury of all people in middling circumstances — molasses gingerbread. It sweetened apple and pumpkin pies, and apple sauce, and was made into candy, as at present.

As a stimulus to diligence on the farm or at school, parents could propose nothing more attractive to children than a candy scrape; and even a person's right to citizenship may be doubted, who did not, when a boy, love to make, work, and eat molasses candy. Happy was Young America, when, at May training, Election, Fourth of July, and General Muster, he could get ten cents to buy molasses gingerbread and candy. Molasses, butter, and vinegar, molasses and onions, cured colds; molasses and cotton cured burns and scalds.

At the wharves, when vessels were discharging, you would see troops of boys and girls watching, with eagle eyes, the gauger removing the bungs

from the hogsheads. The instant his back was turned, in went a piece of hoop into the cask, the molasses adhering to which was quickly transferred to their mouths, or to a tin pail. The wharves resounded with the beseeching tones of children, crying,—

“Please let me lob! Please let me have a lob of lasses!”

Even the wharf rats caught the spirit of the country, and learned to use their tails for lob-sticks, one putting his tail into the bung-hole while the others licked off the molasses, thus taking turns.

It was a standing rule, then, among careful mothers, to give the children brimstone and molasses all through the spring, “to work in the blood.” Every morning you would hear Mrs. Berry screaming,—

“Joshua! Joshua Berry! have you got your spelling-book?”

“Yes, marm.”

“Have you washed your face, and combed your head?”

“No, marm.”

“Have you fed the cats?”

“No, marm.”

(Mrs. Berry raised cats, and fed them on cream,

in order that their fur might be soft and fine, and then made muffs of their skins.)

“Have you had your brimstone and molasses?”

“No, marm.”

“Well, it’s late; no matter about your head, face, or the cats, but the brimstone and molasses you *must* have. Come back this minute, and take three spoonfuls!”

“O — O — marm, I don’t want ter!”

“This living minute, Joshua, or I’ll take a stick to you!”

A storm now came on, and the vessels were obliged to lie two days in the roads, which did not trouble Captain Rhines, as he knew his cargo was rising in value, and that he was gaining by the delay. It certainly didn’t disturb the boys, who now got together, went on to Hog Island, shot rabbits and squirrels, caught cunners, made a fire, and had a chowder.

The wind coming fair after the gale, they made sail, and had a quick run to Boston.

While Captain Rhines was on shore disposing of his cargo, Joe and the boys had a good opportunity to view the town. It was a great gratification to John Rhines, who had never seen any place larger than Portland, although Boston, then, bore

very little resemblance to the Boston of the present day. But there were objects of thrilling interest to the boys there, and in Charlestown, that no boy of the present time will ever behold, for they do not exist. They saw the very spot that drank the blood of Crispus Attucks, and the old Hancock house, in all its glory, and the stately old governor, who was living in it, and on whose head a price had been set by the British government.

They saw the works, but partially destroyed, that the British had erected on the Neck, Fort and Copp's Hills, and other places. But they were most of all interested in visiting Charlestown and Bunker Hill. Flour and Robert Yelf, who had both been in Washington's army during the siege of Boston, went with them, and pointed out places where the different bodies of troops had been encamped at Bunker Hill, and the intrenchments thrown up by the provincials. They had been comrades with some of the soldiers in that bloody fight, and related to the boys many anecdotes of the battle which they had heard from the actors themselves. They walked over the ground up which the British troops marched, where they had been mown down by the fire of the provincials, and saw the spot where Warren fell.

Charlie, having ascertained that there was a vessel building at Hart's ship-yard, at the North End, true to his mechanical instincts, separated himself from the rest after dinner, and sought out the ship-yard. Here he spent the greater part of the afternoon, watching the progress of the work, and from there went into a boat-builder's shop, where he remained till the shop was closed, and took the dimensions of a boat that was in process of construction.

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAIN RHINES SURPRISES MR. WELCH.

JUST after business hours commenced in the morning, Captain Rhines presented himself to Mr. Welch.

"Why, Captain Rhines, my old friend, I am rejoiced to see you! I began to fear, now that you have abandoned the sea, we should not meet often. I suppose you have been enjoying yourself with your family this winter."

"No, sir; I arrived from Cuba about a week since."

"Well, now, was it very kind in you, after sailing for me almost a lifetime, to go in some other person's vessel, without giving me even a hint of it?"

"I didn't go in a vessel; I went on a *pile of boards*."

"On a pile of boards?"

"Do you remember the time Ben came up here on a raft of logs?"

"I should think I might; it is not so long ago, and was the town talk for a month."

"Well, after Ben had culled out those masts and spars, there was quite a heavy growth of trees left, that, although not suitable for first-class spars, would make excellent shipping-boards. Lumber of that kind was so low that they were hardly worth taking to the mill and manufacturing, and he was about to cut and burn them on the ground, but an idea struck him; he knew that lumber would bring a good price in the West Indies; so he cut and sawed it into boards, made it into something in the shape of a vessel, stuck two masts in it, and sent me to the West Indies with it."

"Then it was *his* idea?"

"*His idea* altogether. I couldn't imagine what he was towing logs over to the mill for, getting them made into boards, then taking them back to the island, and sticking them up to season. Finally, after he had it all planned out, and his lumber all ready, he broached it to me, and asked what I thought."

"What did you tell him?"

"I told him I thought it could be *done*, and that there was money in it. You see the greatest difficulty was to find a master, as he could not go him-

self on account of his promise to Sally; so I told him I'd go. I hope you won't feel hurt at my leaving you and going in another employ."

"Don't you feel ashamed of yourself, running such hair-brained risks, at your time of life?"

"I should if I hadn't succeeded; but as it is, I feel quite comfortable."

"This is a strange story; but the most singular thing about it is, that you ever got there."

"I not only got the *lumber* there, but a deck load of horses, sheep, and hens, besides any quantity of produce, and experienced two heavy gales in the bargain, and one of them in the Gulf Stream."

"I don't see, after all, as Ben's idea would have borne much fruit without *you*."

"Perhaps not; we old folks generally have a good conceit of ourselves."

"But how did you get back?"

"I had a little idea of my own about that."

"What was it?"

"When I was going into Havana, I saw a brig ashore on the Punta, stripped, and a hole in her. I bought her, the spars, sails, and rigging, got her off, repaired her with my own crew, put a cargo in her, and am ready to sell it to you, or any

other good man who is willing to pay me every cent it is worth."

"That was an idea; that was your part of it."

"Yes, that's in my line. I leave the rafts to Ben."

"I wonder if I couldn't go down and sleep on Elm Island, and get some ideas. What is the amount of your manifest?"

"Well, about three hundred hogsheads of molasses, six hundred barrels of sugar, and five hundred bags of coffee."

"And you bought that vessel, repaired her, and bought that cargo with the proceeds of the lumber?"

"To be sure I did, and more too. Ben had but five dollars when the Ark went to sea, and had run in debt for ten barrels of beef that went on board. If the crew had wanted an advance when she went to sea, he could not have paid it to them without borrowing the money."

"Now you have begun again, don't you want to go and make forty or fifty thousand dollars for me?"

"No, I've made up my loss by Williams, have enough to carry me down the hill, and intend to let well enough alone — if I can."

"That's well put in. Now, my old friend, believe me, I am as glad of this good fortune of yours and Ben's as though it had occurred to myself. Go and see what you can do among the merchants, and then come and dine with me, and we'll talk it over. I'll buy your cargo, if we can agree on the price. I expect you to make my house your home."

"I don't look hardly fit, just off a voyage."

"Don't make any excuses, because I shall not take any; besides, if we live, and are well, myself and wife intend to make you a long visit this coming summer."

"You will be most heartily welcome, and we will renew our old gunning experiences. Ben has a dog that will play in fowl first rate."

"Your youngest boy, I suppose, is large enough now to take me about."

"O, yes! He is here with me, is very large of his age, and bids fair to be almost as strong as Ben, only he's a great deal better built, and it is not every man can lay him on his back now."

"Bring him with you; I want to see him; the last time I was at your house, he was a little boy."

When Captain Rhines returned, he told Mr

Welch that he had been offered sixty-two cents for molasses, twelve cents for sugar, and twenty-two cents for coffee on sixty days.

"I will give you the cash, and you may begin to discharge to-morrow, if you will take sixty cents for molasses, ten cents for sugar, and twenty cents for coffee."

"Will you give me the specie?"

"Yes."

"I'll do it. The crew have considerable molasses, sugar, and coffee on board, the proceeds of the ventures they carried out. I don't know whether they will sell it here, or take it home."

"I will buy it if they want to sell it."

"I have some lumber here in a fishing schooner, boards, shingles, and some fish, and of an extra quality."

"I'll take you to a merchant who will give you all they are worth."

John Rhines was in no small degree of perturbation when informed by his father that he was to dine at Mr. Welch's. He cherished dim recollections of him as a dignified gentleman, whose wig and silver buckles inspired him with great awe in his childhood, and would gladly have been excused; however, he resolved to watch his father, and do as

he did. Nevertheless, when he came to the house, much of his embarrassment passed away directly, he was so kindly received by Mr. Welch and his wife. He was, therefore, enabled to acquit himself in a manner that astonished his father, and gave great satisfaction to Mr. Welch, who insisted upon his coming to tea, as he wished to talk with him, when more at leisure, in the evening.

When the repast was concluded, Captain Rhines told John to go on board, and tell the others he had sold, and for how much, and that they could sell their ventures to Mr. Welch if they wished.

Yelf and Seth Warren decided to sell, but Flour, Joe Griffin, the mate, and the boys determined to take theirs home.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOYS IN COUNCIL.

THE boys now drew together for consultation. Never had they such weighty matter of reflection before. The vessel seemed by no means large enough as the theatre for deliberations of such magnitude. They accordingly adjourned to the summit of a large pile of boards on the wharf, and there sat down in conclave.

"If we sell here," said Joe, "we shall get sixty cents for molasses, ten for sugar, and twenty for coffee; it will not cost us anything to take it home; the question is, What can we get *there*?"

"Last week," said Charlie, "I went to the store, and gave for molasses seventy-five cents, coffee twenty-five cents, and a shilling for sugar."

"Did you pay cash?"

"Yes."

"We should be very foolish, then," said John, "to sell it here."

"Only think," said Charlie; "it would make fif-

teen dollars on every hundred gallons, almost seven dollars on every hundred weight of sugar, and eight on every hundred weight of coffee."

"But you must remember," said Isaac, "that is retail price. You couldn't get that for it by the barrel, bag, or hogshead, and you couldn't very well sell it out of your house by the pint or quart. At any rate, I couldn't, for I want to go to sea; then you would be so long selling it, half of it would leak out, and it's terrible stuff to shrink."

"At any rate," said Charlie, "we could sell it by the quantity, and get a good deal more at home than we can here; and there will be no expense in getting it home."

"I should like," said John, "to tell you of a plan I've been thinking about ever since the day that we went over to the island, and got the things; and the more I think of it, the more I can't get it out of my head."

"Let's hear it, John," said Isaac.

"You know what a nice boy Fred Williams has got to be; everybody says there is not a more industrious, better principled boy in town. He is a first-rate penman, good to reckon, and sharp to trade, and everybody likes him. Now, he has always been with us, was concerned with us in the basket busi-

ness, and sold all our baskets for us. I thought he felt real bad, and kind of discouraged, when he saw how much money we were going to have from our ventures, that cost us nothing, as it were, and he digging away in that old mill, and no chance to earn a cent for himself. Now, I move that we put all our stuff in his hands, and let him sell it for us; and that will be a good thing for him, and us, too."

"I'll go in for that," said Isaac.

"That will be just the best thing that ever was," said Charlie. "There's he, and his father, and younger brother right in the mill all the time, and they can take his place when he wants to wait on our customers; and many fishermen come there by water, in the spring and summer, after corn and flour, and they would be glad to buy. There's plenty of room in the mill, and a door that opens right on to the wharf, where you can roll a hog-head or barrel right in."

"But what shall we give him?" said Isaac.

Here the boys were quite at a stand-still. At length, John, looking around, espied his father coming down the wharf.

"There comes father; let's ask him."

Captain Rhines was accordingly made acquainted

with their plans, and requested to solve the difficulty.

"Give him half profits," said the captain; "we often carry ventures to the West Indies at half profits. You let him have molasses at sixty-five cents, he will sell it for seventy; that's five dollars more on a hundred gallons than you would get here, besides his share. Let him have sugar for twelve and a half cents per pound, and sell it for fifteen cents; coffee for twenty-two and a half cents, and he will sell it for twenty-five cents. Now, when it gets round that, while other traders ask seventy-five cents for molasses, he sells for seventy; while they ask a shilling for sugar, he sells for fifteen cents; and for the same quality of coffee three cents less, people will rush to the mill from all quarters (all that have got money), and he will sell it all right off for cash; there will be no waste, nor shrinkage, and you can go about your work, and have no trouble except to put it into the mill."

"But he must have measures, weights, and scales," said Charlie.

"Well, buy them here, and let him pay for half of them. The measures won't cost much, and I can buy you a small, second-hand pair of scales

and weights, and there's a pair of steelyards in the mill that will weigh anything too heavy for the scales. I think it's a bright thought, boys, a first-rate plan; 'twill be a good thing for you and Fred both. No trade is a good one unless both parties are benefited. I think John Strout and Flour would do the same, if you should coax them a little, and it would be better for both of them not to have so much money at once."

"I will coax Flour," said Isaac.

"And I John Strout," said Charlie.

The boys gained their point without much difficulty. John Strout had eighteen barrels of sugar; Flour five barrels of sugar and five bags of coffee; Isaac, ten barrels of sugar and six bags of coffee; John, fifteen bags of coffee; and Charlie, a hogshead of molasses and sixteen bags of coffee.

They now went to work discharging the vessel. John Strout kept perfectly sober, which left Captain Rhines at liberty to sell the cargo of the *Perseverance*.

When the cargo of the *Congress* was all landed, — and it came out in excellent order, — Captain Rhines, after deducting all expenses, and a present he intended to make his crew, had thirty-nine thousand three hundred and thirty-six dollars and

the Congress, — all of which were the proceeds of the Ark's cargo. In addition to this, the cargo of the Perseverance amounted to three hundred dollars more.

Captain Rhines now had the Congress thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned, blacked her bends and iron work where it was rusty, repaired everything that was in the least worn, and put on paint wherever needed, so that she made a fine appearance.

He then invited Mr. Welch to come down, and look at her. The old merchant was very much pleased with her.

“Is she old, captain?”

“Only four years old.”

“Is she sound?”

“As sound as when she was built.”

“Is she tight?”

“Don't leak enough to keep her sweet; you may know that by the order in which the coffee came out.”

“I know she carries well by the cargo she brought. Does she sail well?”

“She's a first-rate sailer, and an excellent sea-boat.”

“I wish I could see her sails.”

“Well, you can.”

And Captain Rhines gave orders to loose them.

“What are you going to do with this vessel?”

“Well, vessels are scarce now, business is coming up fast, and I thought, now the vessel is all paid for, and in good condition, the best thing Ben could do would be to load her with spars or lumber off the island, and send her to the West Indies. A fellow could coin money running there now, and taking sugar and molasses home.”

“But neither you nor Ben would go in her.”

“There are plenty that would. I have two young men aboard (my neighbors’ sons) who would jump at the chance.”

“Would you sell her?”

“I don’t know. It wouldn’t seem a very good calculation to sell her after working so hard to get her, and when we can load her at our own door, and from our own land.”

The old merchant went forward, examined the cables and anchors, had the hatches taken off, and went below. Captain Rhines saw the more he examined her, the better he liked her.

At length he said,—

“Captain Rhines, I want a vessel to go to the East Indies. I’m going to send your old friend Captain

Radford in her. Will you sell this vessel at a fair price? If you won't sell, it's no use to talk."

"Yes, I'll sell her."

"Will you allow me to bore her?"

"Yes, you may bore her and open her; you may take a 'streak' (strake) of plank off wherever you like."

"Well, I will see another party that I want to have concerned with me, and make you an offer."

The next day Mr. Welch came on board, and said,—

"Captain Rhines, I shan't open or bore this vessel. If you feel so sure she is sound, I shall trust to your judgment; you must have had a good opportunity to find out what she was when you repaired her. I will give you fifty-five hundred for her."

"I don't think that's enough."

"Well, I've made you an offer; now make me one."

"I will sell her for six thousand; not a cent less. She is worth that to me, or anybody that has business for her."

"It seems to me a large price, but I want the vessel, and I will give it."

When Isaac found the Congress was sold, and going to the East Indies, he wanted to go in her.

Captain Rhines spoke to Mr. Welch about it, and he shipped as ordinary seaman.

Mr. Welch was interrupted by company the evening on which he had invited John to tea, and had no opportunity to talk with him; accordingly he repeated the invitation.

Mr. Welch possessed, in a remarkable degree, the power of making every one feel at ease in his presence, while, at the same time, he had much of the formal politeness of the old-time manners.

After tea he drew his chair up to that of John, and the first question he asked him was, —

“Well, Master John, has your brother Benjamin shot all the sea-fowl on Elm Island?”

“O, no, sir!” replied John (delighted at the introduction of a subject for conversation in respect to which he felt so thoroughly at home); “there are plenty of sea-ducks, coots, and sheldrakes there, and now it’s time for wild geese to come. I expect Uncle Isaac is making Ben a float while we are up here; then Ben will go into the wild geese.”

“Who is Uncle Isaac?”

“Uncle Isaac Murch? O, he’s the best man in this world! I wish you could see him shoot. He beat me, Fred, and Charlie, with a bow and arrow, and we had guns.”

"I wish I could be down to Elm Island in goose time?"

"Was you ever on the island, sir?"

"Yes, indeed! I've shot many a bird there before you were born, or Ben either. Has he planted or sown anything on the island?"

"Never till last fall, sir; then he sowed some winter rye: he has been busy building his house, cutting spars, and building the Ark. I forgot, sir, *Charlie* did sow some turnips—the first things ever sown on the island."

Then he told Mr. Welch about he and Charlie getting the pig in the night, and Charlie scorching Joe in the brush, and sending his turnips as a venture to the West Indies.

Mr. Welch laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks, and came very near shaking his wig off. He also told him about the pirates who came to the island, and what a reception Ben gave them, and the whole history of Charlie. Nine o'clock, and even ten, came before they were sensible of it. Mr. Welch, who was not in very robust health (being worn down by devotion to business and anxiety about his son James, who was unsteady, and a source of constant grief to him), averred he had not passed an evening more pleasantly for twenty years.

He was passionately fond of gunning, boating, and all out-of-door sports, but for years had been unable to gratify those, except by going once in five years to spend a few weeks with Captain Rhines, or on a short excursion in the vicinity of Boston. But the conversation of the fresh-hearted boy had revived all his early recollections, and taken his mind entirely from his business and his griefs.

"I am sure," said his good wife, "I have not heard Mr. Welch laugh heartily before these five years."

John also told Mr. Welch about Ben's barn, what a great time they expected to have at the raising, and also about their ventures, and that they were going to let Fred Williams sell their molasses, sugar, and coffee for them.

Mr. Welch was so much pleased with John that he insisted upon his spending every evening with him; and, when he went home, made him a present of a beautiful fowling-piece, with shot-pouch, powder-flask, and all the fixings that pertained to it.

During their stay in Boston, Charlie had the tortoise shell Isaac had given him made into a comb for his mother. Isaac had a comb made for

his mother, and snuff-boxes for his father and Uncle Isaac; and a cane for each of them from the stick he had brought from the West Indies, with ivory heads put on them.

Charlie also bought a coarse and fine saw, a splitting saw, bit-stock and bits, a square, a pair of ploughs (a species of plane), tools to make panel-work, some chisels and plane irons, intending to make the stocks himself of the wood Joe Griffin had brought him from Cuba; or, in case he should not dare to undertake it, he knew Uncle Isaac would do it. Finally, he bought a wooden vise to screw on to a work-bench. He borrowed the money to buy all these things of Seth Warren, as he knew he could pay him when he sold his venture; and besides, Uncle Isaac told him to get them, and he would hire him enough to pay for them. These tools, together with what Ben had, were sufficient for all common purposes, and to do any work that was needed around there; or, if necessary, he could borrow of Uncle Isaac. He then bought some dye-stuffs to stain wood with—Brazil wood, logwood, indigo, verdigris, copperas, and alum.

We shall see, by and by, what he wanted of them. When he had all his purchases bestowed

safely on board the schooner, he was happy enough.

Captain Rhines bought a barrel of rum for Ben to use at the raising, and to have in the house upon occasions; also the fixtures for Sally's loom, and a new dress as a present for her. They now made sail for home, and reached the island safely.

"Now, boys," said Captain Rhines, "we will settle up: as you have left the matter to me, I shall give you one hundred dollars apiece; and Isaac's father, the same for him."

"That is too much!" said Joe Griffin; "we have carried ventures, and made well out of them (more than we could have made at home), and the wages we agreed to go for would not come to more than a quarter of it."

"I know that," replied the captain; "but there are many things to be thought of, in respect to this voyage, that don't come into common seafaring business at all. In the first place, you ran a great risk in getting there in such a craft, and did not know how you were going to get home. In the next place, I could not have got that vessel off, and repaired her, with a common crew of men. I could not have brought the brig home in the winter time, deep loaded, with only seven in the

ship's company, all told (and one of them a boy), if they had not been, every one of them, extra men, and exerted themselves, from the time we went away till we got back, for the common interest; so don't say any more about it, but take your money, and thank God. We've made a heap of money, and I don't think these things ought to be all on one side."

"But, captain," said the mate, "you know how I conducted in Havana, and failed you at a pinch; I think there ought to be some deduction for that. I don't think I deserve to have any more than my wages, if I do that."

"You've made it up since, John. These are days of too good luck to rake up old scores,"—shoving him the money across the table.

Ben and his father now proceeded to settle.

"Ben," said he, "I've sold the brig, and brought you home forty-five thousand three hundred and thirty-six dollars, besides what I got for the lumber and other stuff in the Perseverance, which brought three hundred dollars more; that is, clear of all expenses, for the schooner's freight will pay for the beef, and more too."

"The beef is paid for. Since you have been gone, I have taken my spars to Wiscasset, sold

them, paid for the beef, bought nails for my barn, and beef and pork enough to last all summer. I tell you, father, I left you to fix the men's wages as you liked; now I am going to fix your compensation. I am going to divide this money equally between us."

"That is too much, Ben. You got up the whole thing; I never should have thought of sending lumber in that way, nor could I have contrived a way to secure it."

"There is not another man would have got that lumber to the West Indies, or that would have thought of going into Havana, and getting a permit to trade; besides, was not buying and repairing that brig, putting a cargo in her, getting her in such good shape as to sell her for almost four thousand dollars more than you gave for her, both your idea and your execution, from beginning to end?"

"I can't deny that; and therefore I thought, if you gave me the six thousand the brig sold for, I should be more than satisfied."

"No, father; we must divide equally. I am a young man; you are an old one, and have John and the girls to provide for; and then, I don't mean you shall have any excuse for running off to sea again."

It would have been difficult to tell which Sally was the most pleased with—the tortoise-shell comb from Charlie, the new dress from Captain Rhines, or the reeds, comb, flax, and other things for making cloth, so thoroughly domestic was she in all her tastes, and so desirous to be weaving, in which she delighted.

CHAPTER IV.

HELPING YOUR NEIGHBOR.

IF ever a surprise was perfect and overwhelming, it was when the Perseverance ran alongside the mill wharf, and John Rhines and Charlie went into the mill, where Fred was busily employed in grinding, and told him of the good fortune in store for him.

The whole affair was so sudden, so entirely unexpected, that the poor boy seemed utterly unable to comprehend it; but when he went on board the vessel, saw the goods, and John and Charlie began to carry the bags of coffee into the mill, the tears sprang to his eyes, and he stammered his thanks in broken sentences, more eloquent than the most studied speech. John Rhines had rightly guessed at the state of Fred's feelings; he had, indeed, felt somewhat discouraged when he saw his companions in possession of so much property — felt that he was left out; it had caused him many a bitter hour, and made the work in the mill drag heavily,

although the proud boy had succeeded in concealing it from the observation of all but John.

This noble conduct of his mates filled him with gratitude and new life. The mill was large, and, as the flour would be flying all over the molasses, and sticking to the measures, the boys set to work (Charlie being master workman), parted off a room, made a rough counter, and put up the scales. They also hewed out some sticks of timber, and constructed a platform to roll the hogshead of molasses up on, so as to draw from it readily. They had brought wrapping-paper from Boston, the expense of which they were to divide between them, and Mrs. Williams volunteered to spin the twine on her flax wheel. Ben was so much pleased with the conduct of the boys, that he drew off two barrels of molasses from his hogshead, and added it to the rest.

Fred now gave each of the parties a receipt for the amount of property he had received from them, when it appeared that he had in his hands molasses, coffee, and sugar to the amount of one thousand nine hundred and twenty-two dollars. This was a large amount of property to place in the hands of a boy, and manifested the confidence his companions reposed in him.

They now arranged that Fred should sell only for cash, and should render an account of sales every two months.

It will be recollected that Captain Rhines gave his crew a hundred dollars apiece. He gave Isaac's share to his father, who refused to take it, saying that the venture was enough for him; he wouldn't take all the boy worked so hard to earn, but leave it for him in Captain Rhines's hands, upon which the captain said he would put it at interest for him.

Fred soon justified John's opinion of his business capacity. He made himself a book, in which he put down all his sales, the quantity, articles, and price. He then got a large piece of canvas, and Uncle Isaac painted on it, in great letters that could be read way off in the bay by the fishermen and people who were passing in boats,—

*Molasses, Sugar, and Coffee at Boston Prices
for Cash.*

A similar one was put on the front of the mill, for the information of people travelling the road, but in smaller letters.

It was soon noised abroad that molasses could be bought at the mill five cents cheaper on a gallon than it could at the store at Wiscasset, or any

where else, and coffee and sugar in proportion. It was also said that the articles were a great deal better, for old Captain Rhines picked them out himself in the West Indies; and if anybody knew what those things were worth, it was old Captain Rhines.

As Yankees never do anything by the halves, people began to say that Fred's molasses was sweeter than anybody's else, his sugar cleaner, and went farther, and there were not so many stones and broken kernels in the coffee; then they could go to mill, and get their groceries all under one; and Fred was so obliging, so good, when women and children came to the mill, to take off and put on their grist for them.

Thus all Fred's past good deeds turned to present profit. From all quarters people flocked to the mill. The traders at Wiscasset and other places complained that their customers would trade with them only in the way of barter. If they had eggs, fish, corn, or any kind of produce, they would come and want to exchange it with them for goods; but whenever they got a little money, they were sure to run and lay it out at the mill; but what was more provoking still, many, who had run up a large bill at these stores, instead of pay-

ing when they had money, would buy of Fred, and thus he picked up all the money that was going.

Some traders at Wiscasset, enraged at this state of things, as they had no sale for coffee, sugar, or molasses, laid their heads together to buy Fred out, and thus put an end to this grievance. They therefore deputed one of their number to act for them. One morning, a fishing schooner ran alongside the wharf, and a man brought in several bushels of corn to grind. Fred had never seen him before. While the grist was grinding, the stranger looked over the stock of goods. Charlie's hogshead of molasses had not been tapped, as Fred had been selling from the barrels; beside this hogshead were piled up thirty-one bags of coffee.

"What do you ask for molasses?" asked the stranger.

"Seventy cents."

"What for coffee?"

"Twenty-five."

"I'll take that hogshead of molasses, and that pile of coffee, at that price.

"You can't have it," said Fred.

"What's the reason? Isn't my money as good as anybody's? I take you at your own offer."

"I don't sell over ten gallons of molasses, or ten pounds of coffee or sugar, to any one man."

"Why not? Isn't it better for you to sell molasses by the hogshead, sugar by the barrel, and coffee by the bag, and take your money, than to be all summer dribbling it out?"

"Yes, but I wish to accommodate the neighbors, who are not able to buy by the quantity."

The trader, seeing he could avail nothing, began to abuse Fred at a great rate, who was alone in the mill. He was so enraged at being checkmated, that he would probably have proceeded to blows, had not Ben at that moment come over with his canoe and some corn he wanted ground. The storekeeper, in the very whirlwind of his passion, caught sight of Ben through the door of the mill as he was getting out of the canoe. His wrath was arrested in mid volley; his clinched fist, which was raised over Fred's head, sank quietly down; the flush of rage on his cheek turned to a deadly pallor, and, trembling like a leaf, he began to tie up the bags of meal that were already filled.

He was well acquainted with Ben, knew that it was with his approbation, and that of his father, that the goods were intrusted to the boy, and justly dreaded the consequences that might result

from it, should Ben have overheard the conversation, and already imagined himself in the clutches of the lion. He had, indeed, overheard the conversation, and, although the last person to espouse a quarrel, determined to give the intruder a hint that would relieve Fred, in future, from any annoyance from him or others.

“Good morning, Mr. Anderson,” said he; “it seems to me that you come a great ways to mill, when you have one at your own door.”

Anderson, whose teeth chattered in his head, muttered something about their making better meal in this mill, and hastened to get his bags on board the vessel. As the vessel was leaving the wharf, Ben called after him, and said, “Mr. Anderson, there is about as much work in this mill as can be well ground here, and in future I would recommend that you and your neighbors encourage your own miller.”

Happy to escape so easily, Anderson determined to act upon the suggestion, and recommend it to others.

The affair became known after a while, and added immensely to Fred's popularity. It was one of those things that, passing from mouth to mouth,

and gaining strength by every repetition, influences the decision of a whole community.

When it came to be understood that Fred was alone in the mill (with the exception of his brother, a mere boy), and had, without advice from any one, refused the offer of the trader, the whole neighborhood settled down in the belief that Fred Williams had the root of the matter in him, was the right sort of a fellow to have in a place, worked for the good of the community, and was a public benefactor.

“The rascals wanted to grind the face of the poor,” said Jonathan Smullen; “they wanted to buy up all that stock, and then, next winter, when it was all frozen up, and no getting to Portland nor anywhere else, charge their own price for it. Ben ought to have shook his ‘liver-pin’ out of him.”

“If another one of them shows his head in this cove,” said Joe Griffin, “we’ll give him a coat of tar and feathers.”

Even the virtues of Fred’s ancestors were called to mind, and served to increase the weight of public opinion in his favor. His father, though an honest, energetic man, was possessed of a crabbed temper, and ill liked, while his grandparents were

remembered as persons of great worth, and universally beloved.

When the matter came to the ears of Aunt Molly Bradish, she instantly exclaimed, "It is the spirit of his grandfather that he was named after; there's a great deal in the blood. Old Mr. Fred Williams (I mind him well) was a great farmer; he always had two years' supply of corn on hand, and calculated to have flax kept over; he said it was as good as money at interest. One year the corn was about all cut off by the frost; but he had a great crop, for he had planted early on a burn, and old corn besides. People were so put to it that they had to eat their seed-corn, or starve. You may depend upon it, there was a great cry in the spring for seed-corn, and people who had any of last year's crop asked awful prices. But Mr. Williams (noble Christian man that he was) wouldn't take a cent more than the old price. Lots and lots of people, that had plenty of money, came from great distances, and wanted to buy a bushel, and ten bushels, or all he had to spare; but he wouldn't sell over a peck to any one man, nor raise the price one penny; and he gave seed to those who warn't able to buy it: the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him. I do wish you

could have been to the funeral when the good old man was buried; people came from all the places round; the sermon was in the meeting-house, and it was crowded. The minister, in his discourse, brought in all about what he did in the famine, and many other good things about him, but he couldn't say anything that was too good. When the minister sat down, up gets old Mr. Rhines (that was Captain Rhines's father, Ben's grandfather), right in his pew. He was a large, tall man (all the Rhineses were large), and could be seen and heard all over the house; his long, white hair was falling over his shoulders; his voice trembled; while leaning on his cane with both hands, he said, 'Neighbors, I have lived to a great age, and am just ready to follow him that is gone; but before he is laid to rest, I want to bear witness. Fifty-five years ago last Candlemas, I had a family of little children, no bread to give them, and no money to buy any (because the crops had been cut off), and we had eaten up the last kernel of seed-corn. Then this good man, whose body lies in that coffin, gave me corn to feed my children, and to plant my land in the spring, he saved the lives of my family, and I believe has gone to his reward.' The tears streamed down his cheeks, and there wasn't a dry eye in the

house when he sat down. Now, what I'm coming to is this: When Captain Rhines was holding his finger on the 'arter' of that poor boy's leg, after the dog tore him, carrying him to his own house, and taking care of him; when Mrs. Rhines was nursing him, winning his heart, and making a good boy of him; when Captain Rhines and Tige were pulling his little sister Fannie out of the mill-pond; when Ben and his father were encouraging the boys to set Fred a trading (though they didn't know it), they were all at work paying back that old debt of their father and grandfather. Mr. Williams, though he has been so many years in a better world, is doing the same thing, through his *grand-child*, that *he* did in the famine, — helping his neighbors. If you should be spared to see as much as I have of the dealings of the Almighty with his critters, you will come to know that he is good and just, showing mercy to those that love him, to the third and fourth generation."

Joe was so much interested by the old lady's story, that he determined to let Fred have part of his venture.

Every week the business increased as the spring approached, and Fred's location and prices became known among the fishermen, who were fitting

away at the different ports along the shore, and his stock began sensibly to diminish.

Charlie and John were delighted with the success of their plan. They made a lot of baskets for him to sell, and also carried sea-fowl, that they killed, to the mill.

CHAPTER V.

THE EFFECT OF THIS SUDDEN INFLUX OF WEALTH.

There is nothing that so puts to the proof the innate stamina of character, as the sudden transition from poverty to wealth, and the reverse. Persons who draw prizes in a lottery are often ruined by it.

But the characters of Ben and Sally resembled in solidity the granite of their native soil; and the advent of prosperity made, apparently, no more impression than the fall of a snow-flake upon the precipice. When Ben had received the money from his father, he put it in an old candle-box without any cover, and shoved it under the bed, where it remained a week, till Sally, finding it in her way in sweeping, put it in the secretary, in the front room, which was (as we have stated before) the only really valuable article of furniture in the house, and was one her father had brought from London. Everything seemed to go on as before, except that those evidences of anxiety that dwelt

upon the faces of the pair during the absence of Captain Rhines, had vanished.

Our readers must remember that the times were unsettled as respected business operations, and no confidence in matters of finance encouraged the investment of capital in public and other securities.

At this time a conversation took place, at the fireside, between Ben and Sally, that is worth recording. Ben was now rich, according to the ideas of that time and place; for at the price of land there he could have bought a whole county.

As they drew around the fire, a happy group, after Captain Rhines and their other friends had departed, Ben said, "Now, Sally, if you prefer it, I will buy a farm and build a house anywhere on the main land you wish, where you can see your mother and friends, go to meeting, and have all the society you wish."

"Why do you want to leave this island, Ben, when you have worked so hard to get it? What made you come on to it?"

"I came because I could see no other way in which we could live and have a home without my going to sea."

"Was that all the reason?"

"Why, no; I have always loved the spot ever since I first saw it."

"And love it just as well now?"

"Yes."

"So do I, just as well as you do, and haven't the least wish to leave it."

Charlie, who had waited with great apprehension the decision of his mother, flung his arms around her neck and kissed her. Ben was so delighted that he knew not how to express himself, and remained silent.

"When you bought the island," continued Sally, "I thought it my duty to do what was for my husband's interest, and made up my mind to do it. I had been on the island when I was a little girl, with the boys, berrying, and could not recollect much about it; but the day I came on, in that terrible squall, and found shelter in the cove, and sat down wet and shivering before this great fireplace, I began to feel it was home, and love it, and have loved it better every day; and if that money in the candle-box is going to take us away from Elm Island, I think you had better fling it off the end of the western point."

"Is that the way you feel, Sally?"

"That's the way I feel, Ben. I should like, of

course, to be near mother, and be able to go to meeting more on the Sabbath; but we can't have everything we want in this world. It will be very different here now from what it was before, when we had a heavy debt on us, and were compelled to economize every moment of time and every cent of money. Now we can take the time, if we like, and if we want to go to meeting, go off Saturday night; or if we want to go and make a visit in the week, and the work drives, we can hire help. We've come on here to see what we can make of this spot, and now we are here, I want to carry it out. I wouldn't take the gift of a farm, with garden, orchard, and pear trees, and the house full of blankets, quilts, butter, and cheese; I'd rather make them myself. Just give me a loom, sheep, and flax, and I'll take care of the rest, and be as happy as the days are long. I've never seen the moment that I wanted to leave Elm Island, and more than that, I don't expect to."

"Well, Sally," replied Ben, "you feel just as I do. I couldn't have expressed my feelings any better myself; and now I will tell you the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I thought it my duty to tell you, that if you were not contented here, I would (now I am able) leave, for I have

always been haunted with the idea that you might be uneasy, and was keeping it to yourself on my account. If you had said, Go, I should have gone, but I should have gone with tears in my eyes and sorrow in my heart. My arm never would have the strength anywhere else it has here. It would be a sad thing for me, when I stepped over the threshold in the morning, not to hear the sound of the brook falling over the ledge."

"Well, it's all settled and understood now," said Sally; "and we'll build, plant, sow, and reap, and try not to forget from whence all our blessings come. But I wonder that Charlie should feel so much attached to this island, where, from one year's end to another, he has no young company, except they come on a visit. I should think he would like to be where he could have playmates, and see John, Fred, and Uncle Isaac every day of his life."

"Not love Elm Island!" cried Charlie, with an emphasis on the words that was almost a scream. "Not love Elm Island! Didn't I come here a poor, heart-broken orphan boy, and find father, mother, and home? Didn't I cut the first tree here and make my canoe, and learn to work and earn my own living? Isn't the old maple here,

and everybody and everything I love? I don't believe it would seem half so good to see John, Fred, and Uncle Isaac, if I saw them every day; but now, when they come on here, or I'm going to see them, my heart leaps right up, and it does me good to think about it for a month afterwards. Then I can't get things, and have to contrive and make them, and that learns me and draws me out. Didn't we build the Ark here, and I send my venture in her, and get a whole hogshead of molasses? and ain't we going to build a barn, and do ten thousand things now Elm Island is *ours*, and there's no rent to pay. O, won't we make the chips fly!"

Ben and Sally did not rise as early as usual the next morning, having sat up so late the night before, talking; but Charlie was up before it was fairly light, as he had a purpose to accomplish. Creeping down stairs in his stocking feet, he put his shoes on upon the doorstep, and yoking the oxen as silently as possible, speaking to them in whispers, he took the brush from the "Twilight," when she stood revealed in all the glory of red, green, and blue paint, and hauled her to the water's edge. He then put in the mast, and, taking Ben's canoe, anchored her in the cove before the house, putting a stone in the stern to bring her down aft,

and make her look rakish. He then tied up the oxen, crept up stairs, and got into bed. Ben rose, and as he opened the door to go out, the sun came up over the tops of the spruces on the eastern point, and enveloped the canoe in a flood of light; the red stripe on the edge, the painted ports, the letters "Twilight, of Elm Island," on the stern, glistened in the bright sunlight. Ben rubbed his eyes in astonishment, and called Sally. While they were gazing and admiring, Charlie came down.

"Charlie," said Sally, "I shall begin to think you are a wizard."

"How do you like her, mother?"

"She's a beauty; and what a beautiful name!

"Did Uncle Isaac paint her for you?"

"No, mother; I did it all myself."

"When?"

"Last fall."

"Where did you get the paint?"

"I got the yellow at Indian Point; then I roasted it, and made it turn red. Uncle Isaac told me to, and he told me how to make the black out of blubber. I got the white lead at the stores, and the English captain gave me the other colors."

They went down to the shore to look at her, and saw the oars, and painting inside.

"I suppose," said Ben, "you would like to go over and exhibit her to the boys."

"Yes, father."

"Well, it's a nice day, and you can go after breakfast."

Ben went to his sea-chest, and took out a part of a vessel's flag that had all the colors on it. Sally made a little flag of it, and Charlie fastened it to the end of the sprit. It was a calm morning, and Charlie, sitting down to his oars, pulled for the main land, singing all the way. When he was nearly over, a light breeze sprang up. Charlie spread the sail, and the flag streamed out on the breeze in fine style.

It was now about time for the wild geese to come; and the first thing Captain Rhines and John did, in the morning, was to look narrowly along the shores and edge of the ice, for geese or other birds.

The captain espied the canoe. "John," cried he, "what kind of craft is that?"

They looked at it with great curiosity.

"She's a gay-looking craft, at any rate,—painted ports, red bead round her, green bottom, two eyes in her bow, and the American flag. Get the glass, John, and let us look at that fellow in the stern of her."

The moment Captain Rhines put the glass to his eye, he exclaimed, "Why, it's Charlie!"

Our readers may imagine the surprise and delight of John and Fred, when they saw this new evidence of Charlie's ingenuity. John tended the mill and the store, while Fred took a sail with Charlie; and then they had a talk on business matters, and looked over Fred's books with an air of great satisfaction.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARLIE MAKING SUGAR.

WHILE Charley was in Boston, Uncle Isaac and Sam had made Ben's float, and Uncle Isaac and Ben had tried the barn frame, to see if all the joints came together right; put the sills together, and Uncle Sam had underpinned them, so that all was ready for raising.

Ben now determined to devote some time to gunning, since the snow was not gone sufficiently to admit of working the land. Charlie had, accordingly, obtained leave to employ the interval in making sugar, and, in his excursion to the main land, was influenced by other ideas than the mere desire of showing the "Twilight." He had been told that, during the revolutionary war, Uncle Isaac and Sam had made salt by boiling down salt water in a creek near his house, as salt was very high during the war, and that the great kettles they boiled it in were there still; therefore he was going to see if he could borrow one of Uncle

Isaac. He also wanted some instruction in respect to making sugar, and to tell Uncle Isaac about the tools he had bought in Boston.

Uncle Isaac lent him the boiler, and told him he would haul it down to Captain Rhines's cove; then he could come over in Ben's large canoe and get it: he also told him what kind of trees to tap, and how to tap them, and lent him a smaller kettle to grain the sirup in. It was necessary he should have spouts to put into the holes in the trees to carry the sap: there being no elder on the island to make them of, Uncle Isaac went with him to a gully, where he procured an abundance.

As it was a pleasant day, and the weather at that time of year quite uncertain, Captain Rhines told John he might take his large canoe and go with Charlie: accordingly, they put in the kettle and the elder, and, with the Twilight in tow, went to the island.

Charlie now had business enough to call out both his energies and ingenuity. Ben offered to help him; but Charlie disdained all aid except that which was absolutely necessary to handle the large kettles. He dug clay in the creek, and made two arches with stones laid in clay mortar, and Ben helped him place the kettles on them.

He next cut down small trees that he could handle, built a log camp around the kettles, and covered the roof with boards; then he took the cattle and hauled wood to boil with; then he cut off the pieces of elder, the right length for spouts, and punched out the pith; cut down some small hemlocks, and made troughs to catch the sap. He now bored holes in the trees, which were very large and near together, picking out those that had the largest tops, put in the spouts, and set the troughs under.

The snow was still deep in the woods; but he put on a pair of snow-shoes, and, with a cask on a hand-sled, went from tree to tree, collecting the sap, and, taking it to the camp, poured some into the kettles, and started the fire. While he was collecting the sap, Sally or Ben kept the fire up, and skimmed the kettles for him.

After the boiling had been going on some time, he came running to the house, and said, "Mother, there's one thing I forgot to ask Uncle Isaac. How shall I know when it's boiled enough?"

"I'll show you, Charlie;" and she went to the camp with a dish of water in her hand. Having the water about an inch in depth in the basin, she dropped in a little of the sirup, which cooled on

the bottom, without mixing with the water. "That's boiled enough, Charlie; taste of it."

Charlie turned off the water, and taking the wafer from the bottom of the pan, said, "This is sugar, mother; I can feel the grains between my teeth."

"You can turn it on the snow, and try it in the same way; if it is not boiled enough, it will run all into the snow, just like molasses: but I never saw anybody bore holes in trees before; our folks used to cut a gash in them and stick in a chip."

"Uncle Isaac said that was a slovenly way, and killed the trees; that it might do for people who had trees enough, but we were on this island, and if we killed these trees we couldn't have any more."

"Why don't you tap the great maple? That would run a lot."

"O, mother, that is a chosen tree; I wouldn't tap that if I never had any sugar."

"It don't hurt them any to tap them. There's a great maple in Captain Rhines's door-yard, that I have heard him say his father used to tap more than sixty years ago. It has been tapped more or less ever since, and there's not a dead limb on it."

"I can't tap the old maple, mother; it's the '*pledge-tree*,' where we took the pledge with Uncle Isaac. It was the first tree I got acquainted with when I came on the island. When you and father told me I might stay here, I came and sat down on the roots of that tree, and watched the pirate vessel till she went out of sight; then I kneeled down and prayed to God, just as my mother told me to, and thanked him that he had given me a home. Do you think I would draw the blood out of *that* tree, and sell it for *money* at the store? I should as soon think of boring into the *pulpit* in the meeting-house. I would tap my own *veins* before I would tap *that* tree."

"You are a singular boy, Charlie."

"Ain't I a good boy, mother?"

"Yes, dear," she replied, putting her arms around his neck and kissing him, "but not like any other boy I ever knew."

As she was turning to go away, she said, pointing to a magnificent yellow birch, that stood right out in the sun, towering above most of the other trees, "Tap that, Charlie, in a few weeks, — for it is too early now, — and I'll make you some beer."

"Tap a birch? Will a birch run?"

"Yes, indeed, as much as three maples. You

can make real nice beer out of birch sap, that is wholesome to drink in the spring of the year, and first-rate vinegar."

"What a good tree a birch is, mother! I made my boat-sail, hat, and box out of the bark; Uncle Isaac made his canoe, and a dish for you; father makes withes out of the young trees; and now you are going to make vinegar and beer out of the sap. Ain't that a good many things to make out of one tree?"

"Yes, dear; and that is not all. People, when they shingle a house, put strips of the bark over the cracks, under the shingles, because it never will rot; and I have heard my grandfather say, that when he was a boy, and went to school, it was all he had to learn to write on."

Charlie now, every day, had some sugar to put by. When the clear sap, which he strained into the kettle, was boiled down to a sirup of sufficient consistency, he dipped it into the smaller boiler, where it was heated over a slow fire, but not to boiling, and milk put into it, which caused all impurities to rise to the surface, when it was again skimmed, then put into another vessel, and stirred while cooling, which caused it to grain and assume the form of sugar. It was next put into a barrel

with holes in the bottom; the sirup drained through these holes into a tub, leaving the sugar dry. This sirup was nice to eat on hasty-pudding, and with bread. Sally made coffee with sap, instead of water, which Charlie liked very much.

He had not the modern conveniences for making sugar; and as he was obliged to boil it in an iron kettle, it was a little dark-colored, but it was clean and good, for Charlie was a very particular body, and could not abide the least mite of dirt.

He collected so much sap, that at length he was unable to boil it before it would sour. Ben then left off his gunning to help him, and Sally put by her work, and, taking turns, they boiled all night. They did not stop to make the sap into sugar, but made it into sirup, and put it into barrels, in which state it would keep a long time, and could be boiled down to sugar at their leisure. Sally also filled the great kettle in the house with sap, which she could boil while she was doing her work.

The more sugar Charlie made, the more eager he became, and scarcely gave himself time to eat or sleep, as he knew that when the buds on the trees began to start, the sugar season would be over for that year. He looked with pride upon the barrels rapidly filling and set to drain, wishing

Uncle Isaac would happen over and see what he was doing.

Charlie's sugar orchard presented a scene of wild, stern beauty that was exceedingly interesting. It lay upon the declivity of the middle ridge, extending to the flat below, and consisted of a thick growth of maple, occasionally intermixed with yellow and white birch, and other trees.

Upon the summit of a sharp knoll stood the yellow birch, to which reference has been made, lifting itself far above some scattered beeches, by which it was surrounded. At a little distance from it, in a clear spot, stood the great maple.

The camp was situated at the foot of the declivity, in order that the sap might come down hill, and thus the toil of transportation be lessened. The arch in which the kettles sat was of stones laid in clay mortar, also the chimney for a few feet up, after which it was what is termed cat and clay, that is, made of clefts of wood laid cob-fashion, and plastered inside and out with clay to prevent it taking fire. The ground was covered with snow, and in all directions among the trees were the roads where Charlie had hauled sap, and the impressions of his snow-shoes; while every now and then, in some dark nook, a raccoon might be seen

helping himself to a drink of sap; and the gray squirrels, which Charlie had introduced there, were often found engaged in the same occupation.

One portion of Captain Rhines's land was covered with a heavy growth of white oak, inhabited by innumerable gray squirrels. John had given Charlie four, which he had caught in a box-trap. Charlie let them free on the island, and they had become quite numerous.

CHAPTER VII.

BEN AND THE WILD GEESE.

WHILE Charlie is thus busily engaged in his sugar operations, let us take a look at Ben and his new gunning float. The float was very large, in order to accommodate the great bulk of the "Lion of Elm Island," dug out of a log, and very thin. It was considerably wider at the stern than the bow; and in the stern, just above the water line, was a round hole through which to put the handle of the sculling-paddle. It also had two light oars and thole-pins, in order that he might row cross-handed, which was the universal fashion of pulling in that section. It was painted white outside.

The wild geese feed in holes in the middle of large fields of ice, along the edges of it, and often sit and float on the sheets and cakes of ice drifting about in the bays, and in the night, when all is still, come on the flats. They are exceedingly keen of sight, quick of hearing, and very difficult to approach, though they were much less so at the time

of which we are speaking than at present ; besides, they were then much more numerous, covering the ice and water with large flocks, and causing the bays and creeks to resound with their "conking."

The gunner endeavors to deceive the geese by making his float appear like a floating ice-cake, and by concealing his person as much as possible.

Suppose we watch the movements of Ben as he is preparing himself and his float for a night's excursion among the geese. He has been helping Charlie about his sugar through the day.

It is now near sundown. In the first place, he covers the bottom of the float with straw ; he then fastens a piece of board, three or four inches wide, along the sides at the water's edge ; and edgeway upon these boards he piles snow till it reaches the upper edge of the float, and pats it down hard with his hand, then fastens a thin cake of ice across the bow, puts on a white shirt, and a white night-cap on his head.

He now puts into the float a small spy-glass and three guns ; one of them is called a *wall-piece*, the barrel seven feet in length, which would carry to a great distance, and which nobody but Ben could hold out at arm's length. This gun would kill at a great distance ; Ben often shot geese out of a flock with it as they flew over.

After sweeping the shore with his glass, he gets in, and pulls in the direction of some geese he sees sitting upon a sheet of floating ice. He rows along leisurely, for he wants the sun to go down, and the twilight to come on, as the geese will be less shy then.

As he approaches them, he silently takes in his oars, and, shifting his position from the middle to the stern of the boat, takes up the paddle, and, dipping it noiselessly into the water, keeps on. He is now sufficiently near to attract the attention of the quick-sighted game. He lays himself flat on his back on the straw in the bottom of the boat, and, putting the paddle through the hole in the stern, brings it over his left shoulder, and sculls her along, his head being just enough elevated to see the geese over the bow of the float.

It is of great consequence that the gunner be able to scull steady. The object of dressing the man in white, and the float in snow and ice, is to deceive the geese, and make them think it a drifting ice-cake. But, if the float sheers this way and that, and rolls from side to side, they detect the difference in a moment.

Ben was no novice in sculling, and he steadily and swiftly neared the ice, along the edge of which

the dark forms of the geese could now be plainly seen, as they sat thickly clustered together, occasionally moving, stretching up their heads, and "conking," as though they had by no means made up their minds to tarry where they were for the night. Ben, seeing they were uneasy, was tempted to try the long gun, with which he knew he could now reach them, and laid his hand upon it; but the geese becoming more quiet, he relinquished his purpose, and pushed on. He was soon near enough, when, silently raising the gun, he poured the whole charge into the midst of the flock. As they rose in a cloud, filling the air with their cries, he fired the other gun, and seven dropped on the ice. He instantly fired the long gun after the fugitives, and dropped three more. He now picked up twelve from the edge of the ice and out of the water as the result of the first fire, making twenty-two in all.

There was both pleasure and profit in gunning at that time; fowl of all kinds were in large flocks; the gunners were few in number, and no one ever thought of firing at a single goose, or even three or four.

It was now dark, but Ben heard some geese in the open water, and sculled in the direction of the

sound; their cries became more distinct, and he was soon able to distinguish the dark outline of the flock; and out of these he obtained eight, and from another body in the water six more.

Elated with his success, he determined to pull farther up the bay among the drifting ice, where he heard a great screaming of geese. Threading his way noiselessly among the ice-cakes, he, for a long time, saw nothing that looked like geese, although he heard them, apparently in great numbers, all around him. At length he saw an ice-cake, drifting down the bay, the whole broadside of which was black with geese. "There are hundreds and hundreds in that flock," said Ben to himself. He held the float stationary, quivering with excitement, and, scarcely stopping to take aim (they were so near), fired all three guns right into the mass. Not a goose rose.

"By Heavens!" cried Ben, "I've killed the whole of them—every one! What will Uncle Isaac and father say to that?"

And, paddling up to the ice-cake, he ran his arms to the elbows into a heap of black mud. The tide, which was very high, had floated off an ice-cake, that had lain all winter against the bank, taking the soil along with it.

"I guess I'd better go home now," said Ben, "if I've got to shooting mud banks."

But the fog had come in; he could see neither the island nor the main land; but he knew he was above the island, and that it must be ebb tide; and, wrapping himself in a long jacket that he had brought to be prepared for emergencies, he lay down among the geese, and went to sleep. When he awoke, it was nearly sunrise, and the tide had drifted him about a mile below the island. He arrived home just at breakfast time, to the great delight of Sally, who was anxious to obtain all the wild-geese feathers possible, in order to make some nice beds; for heretofore they had sold all the feathers to help pay for the island, as feathers always commanded good cash prices.

Sally now was looking forward to the time when she should have some chambers finished, and was making preparations for beds, bolsters, and pillows.

While Ben was slaying the geese, his father, John, and Uncle Isaac were equally busy; indeed, as Sam was building a pier for a bridge, Ben and Uncle Isaac often went in the same float. Some four or five miles above the island was a large cove, from which the ice had not started, and in the midst of it was a space of open water. In

this spot the geese congregated from all quarters, perfectly safe from the gunners, and bade them defiance. They were too far from either shore to be reached by shot, and it was impossible to approach them on the ice without being perceived. Here they were heard screaming all night long. Night after night, as the twilight came on, did Captain Rhines, John, Ben, and Uncle Isaac coast along the edge of the ice, looking and longing.

One night, as they were returning moodily home, after passing through this tantalizing process, Ben said, —

“Uncle Isaac, this is too bad! I can’t endure this any longer! Why can’t we do this?—haul the float over the ice into that hole in the afternoon, when these fellows are all scattered over the bays feeding, and lie there till they come at night, and then give ’em ‘Hail Columbia.’”

“So we could,” said Uncle Isaac, “if they didn’t take alarm the moment they saw the float, and clear out; for you know they will be up in the air, and can look right into the float, and see us and the guns.”

“Do you think they will be afraid to come?”

“I don’t know; I think it’s worth trying.”

“We shall never know till we do try; but there’s

one thing about it, if we fire, and frighten them out of the hole, they will then go where we can get at them."

"I'm for trying it."

The next day they put fresh snow and ice on the float, chalked the gun barrels and stocks, and in the afternoon dragged the float over the ice into the hole. It was a tremendous work, for the distance was great; but the probability of killing so many geese would have lured these inveterate gunners into the crater of a volcano. Ben was for anchoring her in the middle, but Uncle Isaac objected.

"They will come all round her then," said he, "and be more likely to find us out; and, if they don't, it won't be so good a chance to shoot as when they are all on one side."

By his direction they cut a hole in the ice on one side, and put the cakes back again, so that the float was a little removed from the geese, and then put ice all around her.

"If they come," said Uncle Isaac, "the shot would scatter better. Here it would not be much better than balls, and all go in one place, being so close to, and the geese would be off before we could take up a second gun."

As the sun sank below the horizon, they lay down and waited for the approach of the geese, who soon began to arrive, as the shadows of evening came on, at first but few at a time. The wisdom of Uncle Isaac's arrangement was now manifest. Had the float been anchored in the middle, they would undoubtedly have swam up near enough to have detected the cheat, or got out upon the ice to examine; but, after having been shot at all day, they felt safe in the water, and didn't care to leave it to examine the float that so much resembled the ice-cakes, amid which she lay. They had seven guns in the float, each three of their own, and Charlie's.

It had been hard work dragging the float so long a distance over the ice; they were in a state of perspiration, and, when they came to lie perfectly still, surrounded by ice, with a damp and eager wind blowing from the water, whose chill penetrated to their very bones, the cold became intolerable, their limbs trembled, and their teeth chattered in their heads.

"What fools we are," whispered Ben, "to suffer so! It's real misery."

"Not if we get the geese," replied the stanch old man. "We shall make the greatest slaughter

among them that ever was made in this world, and do something that will be told of long after we are dead and gone."

The success of their enterprise was assured from the moment the first scattering geese alighted in the water, and, without taking alarm, prepared to rest till the next ebb tide, when the feeding-ground would be bare. A fresh flock arrived, and, seeing the others, lit beside them, without question, and began a noisy conversation. The surface of the water was now completely covered with the geese, among which no shot could fail of its errand. Never were gunners in such a state of excitement; they forgot both cold and hunger. As they were in opposite ends of the float, they decided to cross their fire, to make it more effectual.

Uncle Isaac now touched Ben with his toe; the guns made a common report, and the shot rattled among the close-set battalions. Half the geese were asleep, and so sudden and terrible was the attack made upon them, while supposing themselves in perfect safety, that, for a moment, even their keen instinct was at fault. So many of the old ganders (the leaders of the flocks) had been either killed or wounded, that, instead of flying directly away, they flew round in circles, thus

giving opportunity to discharge the other guns in rapid succession ; and when, at last, they flew away, Ben fired a charge from the long gun into the retreating ranks, strewing the surface of the ice with dead and wounded.

It was now nearly daybreak, and no more geese came that night. When it was light, they picked up more on the ice than they did out of the water, showing that they had killed the most at the last fires, after the geese rose.

“That,” said Uncle Isaac, “is because we were so near, that the guns, at the first fire, didn’t scatter much. I don’t believe anybody ever got too near wild geese before.”

They had barely room for themselves and guns in the float, it was so filled with geese. To drag the float back, with her cargo, was much worse than getting her into the hole, as she often broke through the weak places in the ice ; but they were so elated with their success, that it gave them fresh strength and courage, and Ben’s enormous power was put to its full test.

When at length, after dragging the heavy burden a mile and a half, they reached the edge of the ice, and launched her into the water, Uncle Isaac said, as he wiped the sweat from his face, —

"There never was such a slaughter made among the geese in these bays before, and never will be again; this, as I said before, will be remembered and told of long after we are dead and gone. I seriously think, if we had not got the geese, that we should never have been able to get the float out, but should have perished in this hole; but such a haul as this would put life into a dead man. How bad Sam will feel to think he wasn't with us! I'm sure I feel sorry for him."

On arriving at the island, they felt completely exhausted, but ate their breakfast, took some new rum hot, and went to bed.

Charlie went down to the beach, and came running back with such a look of astonishment, that Sally inquired what was the matter.

"Matter!" he screamed; "the float is full heaped! there is a cart-load, and more too!"

"I never shall want any more feathers as long as I live," said Sally; "my beds will all be best beds now."

"You make the beds, mother, and I'll make the bedsteads; there's plenty of birch and maple joist."

"So I will, if I can only get a loom to weave the tick in. I know how, and have got the reeds

and fixings; and Uncle Isaac shan't stir one foot from this island till he has made me a loom. I'll make the harness right off, as soon as these geese are picked, and you must give me some of your elder for quills; you can make the warping-bars yourself, if Uncle Isaac shows you how."

Charlie couldn't leave his sugar-making but a little while at a time, and returned to the camp. Sally now put on the great pot to heat water to scald the geese, that she might pick them more easily. There was one thing in Sally's favor — she didn't have to dress the geese, for they were worth but little to sell; so she only saved a few, and the bodies of the rest were thrown to the crows and eagles.

"Now I do hope one thing," said Sally to herself. "I do hope baby won't wake up; if he does, I'm sure I don't know what will become of me."

Little Ben, in this instance, slept soundly nearly all the forenoon. Sally was no novice at goose-picking, and, delighted at the prospect of such an abundance of feathers, her fingers flew merrily.

"Thank God," said she (looking at a bushel basket, filled to overflowing with feathers, sitting on the floor) "these are not to be sold to pay for the island. Ben has killed fowl enough to make a good many

beds, but they all had to go to pay debts, and get something to eat. I've got a little flax and cotton yarn in the house, enough to make one tick, at any rate. I'll weave it with three treadles, stripe it, and beat it up thick, and make splendid bed, bolster, and pillow-ticks to put these feathers in. We'll have sheep, and sow flax, and I'll fill the house full, from garret to cellar, with sheets and blankets, and make full cloth for the men folks' breeches and jackets; and we'll keep cows, and have butter and cheese. O, I must have a milk cellar! It don't signify. Thank goodness, I know how to do it. I'll let Ben see what I can do. But, dear me, I forgot all about the dinner."

She put on her potatoes to boil, and hung up a goose by a string before the fire to roast, setting a pan under it on the hearth to catch the drip, and every once in the while turning it round with a long stick, when the twist in the string would turn it back again, and keep it moving a short time. She now resumed her work, and her plans for the future, and went on building castles in the air, when she was suddenly roused from her reverie by a cry of mingled delight and astonishment from the cradle.

The savory smell of the roasting goose, filling

the room, had entered the child's nostrils, and waked him up. Sitting up in his cradle, the little creature gazed, with open mouth and great round eyes, upon the feathers flying all about the room, the great white heap in the basket, and two geese, smoking hot upon the hearth, which his mother had just taken from the scalding water.

"O, dear!" cried Sally; "that child has smelt the dinner, and waked up."

In Ben's sea-chest there were some beautiful shells, and pieces of coral (red and white), which the child had always tried to get at, whenever its mother opened the chest, and would often go to it, and cry to have it opened, in order to obtain them to play with; but, though Sally had never permitted him to have them before (thinking, whenever her front room would be furnished, they would be nice ornaments for it), yet, in this crisis, not knowing what else to do, and supposing those, and those only, would keep him still, she took the shells, and, putting them in his lap, bolstered him up with pillows, and returned to her work. But the shells and coral were completely eclipsed by the superior attractions of the feathers. She was soon startled by a smothered scream, and, looking round, saw Ben's heels sticking out of the feathers. He

had scrambled out of the cradle, crawled up to the basket of feathers, and, leaning with both hands on the edge, upset it, and gone head first into the soft mass. His mother pulled him out screaming; his mouth and nose were full of feathers; they stuck to his wet cheeks; and some of the down was in his throat; and he was terribly frightened.

Sally, with that patience which is an attribute of mothers, cleared his throat from the feathers, wiped his tears, kissed him, and put him back in the cradle, keeping a watchful eye on the heap of feathers.

While busy with her work, and apprehending danger principally from the feathers, she heard a scream in the opposite direction. Ben had crawled to the pan, that was set to catch the drip, had upset it, and was swimming in gravy. Sally, out of all patience, slapped his hands.

"I declare," said she, "if he hasn't spilled all the drip that I wanted to make the gravy of! I don't know what I shall do with him."

She attempted to return him to the cradle; but the little mischief, who had found that there was so much more fun out of than in it, set up a persistent screeching, flung the shells all over the room, and utterly refused to stay there. She

accordingly put him on the floor, threatening to whip him if he came near the fire, and giving him the kittens to play with; but the moment his mother's back was turned, he crawled up to the fire, and, putting both hands on a goose, which his mother had just taken scalding hot from the pot, burnt his fingers severely. He set up an awful screeching, and Sally, quite in despair at this new calamity, came near crying. By the time she had soothed the child, and he had sobbed himself to sleep, the goose was half burnt up.

“It's too bad!” said Sally to herself; “now that Uncle Isaac is here to dinner, this goose all dried up, and no gravy. Never mind; there are geese enough, and I'll roast another to-morrow.”

CHAPTER VIII.

A WELCOME GUEST.

SCARCELY had she put matters to rights, when, of all folks in the world, who should come in but John Rhines! He said his father was very fond of maple sugar, and sent him over to help Charlie a few days, and take his pay in sugar. At the sight of his cheerful, handsome face (for he was a noble-looking boy, whom everybody loved, and said he was his father all over), Sally was so overjoyed, that she threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him.

"O, I'm so glad to see you; I've got such an awful job; nobody in the world to help me, and the baby plagues me to death."

"What on earth is the job?"

"Just open that door, and see for yourself."

John threw open the door of the front room, and beheld the pile of geese.

"Soul and body!" he exclaimed, scarcely crediting his senses. "I never saw such a sight in all my born days."

“Nor anybody else.”

“How long have they been killing these? and why didn’t they pick them as fast as they shot them?”

“They killed every one of them last night.”

Then she told him how they did it.

“Mercy sakes! that is more strange still. Why don’t Ben and Uncle Isaac help pick?”

“They are tired out, and gone to bed.”

“Where is Charlie?”

“Up to the camp; he is sugaring off; he can’t leave his kettles; but to-night he can let the fire go out.”

“Well, don’t worry, Sally. I’ll pick every one of these geese for you: you give me an apron, and then look out for your dinner.”

“O, I’m all right, now that you have come; but I want to set the table now; so go up to the camp, see Charlie, and get some sirup. He will be ready to jump out of his skin when he finds you have come; and after dinner we will go at the geese.”

He found Charlie in a thick grove of maples, and the sap running from the trees all around him, while he was busily engaged in boiling. He had a molasses hogshead almost full of sirup, half boiled, which he was keeping to boil down at his

leisure, after the trees had done running, and several barrels filled with sugar set to drain, with a large trough beneath them, to catch the molasses that drained away.

Charlie was delighted at the sight of John, and instantly poured out from the ladle some of the hot, thick sirup, almost sugar, on the snow, to cool, which John ate, pronouncing it first rate.

“What a nice camp you have got, Charlie! Who made the arches and set the kettles?”

“I did it all myself. I borrowed a trowel of Uncle Sam, built the camp, and did the whole; only father helped me get the kettles on.”

“I have seen lots of sugar camps, but I never saw one half so good as this. I don’t believe anybody ever shingled the roof of one before; and what a handsome lot of trees! But what is this for?” said he, going to the end of the camp; “what is this great trough for?”

“That is my feeder, that tends my kettles for me.”

Charlie had made a large trough, that would hold several barrels, and placed it on the stonework in which his kettles were set; one end being close to the edge of the kettles, and the other extending beyond the wall of the camp, through

a hole cut for the purpose. Into the end outside, which had a cover hung on wooden hinges, Charlie poured the sap as he brought it from the trees. In the end next the boiler was a faucet, which Charlie had made, by which he regulated the flow of sap, permitting it to run into the boiler as fast as the sirup in the kettle boiled away.

"I should know you contrived that, Charlie; it looks just like you; especially that cover on the end of the trough."

"Well, you know I have to contrive, because I'm alone, and I'm sure if anybody is going to make anything to eat, they want it clean; they don't want it full of bark and chips, leaves and wood-worms. You may keep it as clean as ever you can, and yet, when you come to boil it, there will be lots of dirt to skim off. I strain all the sirup through a flannel bag."

Sally now blew the horn for dinner.

"There's the horn, Charlie; you go to dinner, and I'll tend the kettles; then I'm going to help pick geese; but to-morrow I'm coming to work with you: the fun we'll have, and the way we'll make sugar, won't be slow."

"They tell about sugar plantations in the West Indies; this is our sugar plantation — ain't it, John?"

"Yes, and we don't have to run the risk of getting the yellow fever, and being buried, as Ike said that Spaniard was in Havana."

John went to the kettles, while Charlie was helping to eat the goose Sally had cooked through so much tribulation. Ben and Uncle Isaac found themselves all right, after their long nap and a hearty dinner; and Charlie, who exercised absolute authority over the mischievous little Ben, took him off to the camp, and kept him till supper time; while the others all went to picking geese. Half the feathers really belonged to Uncle Isaac, but he gave them all to Sally; for he said they had beds enough: besides, he was killing more or less fowl every year. They sat up a good part of the night. Charlie let his fire go down, and helped them; and before morning the picking was over. Uncle Isaac had the last goose. "There," said he, as he finished, and laid it across his knees; "what a master sight of talk there will be in this town, when what we have done comes to be known! It is what never was done before since these parts were settled, and, it's my opinion, never will be again."

"Why," said Ben, "don't you think the geese will be in that hole next spring, to give us another chance?"

“No, I don’t: I haven’t the least idea they will be there for years. It’s my opinion that geese can talk and remember as well as we can. They will talk this matter over, and tell it to each other, the old ones to the young ones, and it will be known in this part of the world just as well as we know about ‘Lovell’s fight’ at ‘Bloody Pond.’ If they don’t tell each other, what makes creeturs so shy where they’ve been hunted, and so tame where they haven’t. The young ones are just as shy as the old ones; and what would make them so, if their parents didn’t tell them, and teach them to be afraid of mankind? Why, I’ve heard the old people say, that when they first settled here, the geese, ducks, herons, and squawks, made such a racket nights, they couldn’t sleep, and had to build fires to drive them off. There’s a great high rock in Mill Cove, close to the bank; and when Joe Griffin’s grandfather was a boy, he used to get behind a thorn-bush on the edge of the bank, and shoot the wild geese on that rock with a bow and arrow; but now we have to use all manner of contrivances to get a shot.”

“I wish,” said Ben, “anybody could learn the goose language; how I should like to scull up to them in the night, and lay in a float, and hear the

old ganders tell the young ones about all the places they had been to, from the northern lakes to the south — one week eating rice in the swamps of South Carolina, and the next sitting on the ice in our bays; and also to hear them tell about all the narrow escapes they have had, being fired at by the Indians and white men; being wounded, and then chased; and the old ganders' instructions to the young ones about guns and floats, and how far a gun will kill, and what to do when they are pursued. I think it would be real interesting."

"Indeed it would," said Uncle Isaac; "more than any story-book. I don't know how long a goose lives, but I know, if they don't get killed, they are a very long-lived creature; and to hear one of them old ganders, who has sailed in the air, and led his flock over ocean and land, perhaps for a hundred years, tell his experience, it must be worth hearing."

The next morning, when Sally awoke, it was blowing and snowing — a real March flurry.

"O, I'm so glad!" said she. "Uncle Isaac can't get off now, if he wants to; he's got to stay and make my loom."

The moment breakfast was over, she broached the matter to him.

"Well," said he, "the first thing is, where is the stuff to make it of, and the tools to work with?"

"There's a whole lot of yellow birch, maple, and oak joist," said Ben, "up chamber, that have been there more than a year, that I had sawed for harrow stuff, or anything I might want; and plank completely seasoned."

"I have got any quantity of tools," said Charlie, "new ones that I bought in Boston: a vice, a bench vice and bits, and chisels of all sizes, just right to make the mortises in the loom; and father has got planes, but I have only the irons: how nice it will be to have you grind them for me! I have got an oil stone, a Turkey stone, that I bought in Boston, and some sweet oil to put on it."

While Charlie was thus running on, Ben interrupted him with the inquiry, —

"Which had you rather do, Charlie, make sugar with John, and have me help Uncle Isaac grind the tools and make the loom, or work with Uncle Isaac while I help John? for the sugar will want two, now there is so much sap, and must be kept going night and day; that is, if you mean to drive business, and make all you can."

Charlie was sorely puzzled: he could do but one,

and wanted to do both. He stood some time in doubt. At length he said,—

“John, how long are you going to stay?”

“Father said I might stay as long as the saw run.”

“O, then I will help Uncle Isaac make the loom.”

Uncle Isaac now laid out the work, and Charlie planed the joist, bored and made the mortises and tenons. Charlie's splitting-saw, and his fine-toothed saw, that he had bought in Boston, now came into excellent use. A good deal of the rock maple joist was full of veins and whorls, called bird's-eye, and the yellow birch was also curly. When this timber came to be planed, it looked splendidly.

“Sally,” said Uncle Isaac, “this will be the best and handsomest loom ever made in this town, for this is beautiful wood, thoroughly seasoned, and I mean to make the joints to pinch a hair.”

“O, Uncle Isaac,” cried Charlie, “I've just this moment thought of something.”

“That's strange; you don't often think of anything.”

“You know them hinges on the sink door that you thought were so handsome.”

"Yes."

"Well, they were made of cherry tree, and I've got the but-end of the tree they were made from."

"Is it dry?"

"Yes, sir; for I skirted it out and put it up chamber, thinking I might want it."

"Go and get it."

Charlie brought the stick. When Uncle Isaac had put his rule on it, he said, "If that had been an inch smaller or two inches shorter, it wouldn't have done; but as it is, 'twill make the handsomest beam that ever was seen. I'll line it, Charlie, and you may hew it out and plane it. Now I've got all my timber except a seat. I don't know where I shall get a plank to make a seat of, that is handsome enough to compare with the rest."

"Saw one out of that mahogany log Joe Griffin gave me."

"A mahogany seat for a loom? That is too good; nobody ever heard of such extravagance."

"No, it ain't one mite too good for my mother to sit on."

"I'm much of your mind," said Uncle Isaac; "is my whip-saw over here?"

"Yes, sir; it has been here ever since we built the Ark."

They carried the log into the woods, made a stage by spiking poles across from four trees, on which they placed the log, and Charlie made sugar, while Ben and Uncle Isaac sawed out the plank, as Charlie did not know how to saw with a whip-saw, which is a large saw worked by two persons, one of whom stands on the top of the stick to be sawed, and the other underneath. It is nearly as large as a mill-saw, and boards and plank can be made with it, where there are no saw-mills. While they were at work making the loom and the warping-bars, Sally was no less busy in making the harness, which is a sort of network to hold the threads, and by which one half of the threads were pushed, up, and the others down, in weaving. When the loom was all made and put together, they scraped it with a piece of saw-plate, rubbed it with dog-fish skin, and oiled it, which brought out all the colors of the wood, the veins and curls, and it looked splendidly. Sally was delighted. "Now I've got what I've been aching for so long," she said — "a loom. We can buy wool and flax; but I hope by another year we shall raise flax and have sheep of our own; but I've got yarn enough all spun to make a bed-tick, bolster, and pillow-ticks, and Ben will be killing birds all the time."

"There's just one more thing I'm going to do," said Uncle Isaac; "and that is, to make you a shuttle, if Charlie will let me have some of that granadilla: that is a very hard wood, and will permit it to be made small, and it is heavy, which will make it better to fling through the web."

In five days they made the loom, warping-bars, spool-frame, and all that pertained to the business of weaving. Sally already had spools that Aunt Molly Bradish had given her long before; for Sally had told her that as soon as they could arrive at it, she was going to have a loom.

"But there's one thing I want to tell you, Sally," said the old lady, as she gave her the spools; "be sure, when you put your first piece into the loom, that you don't draw it in, or begin to weave it Friday, because it is an unlucky day. I never set up a stocking, or a leech, or color any yarn, Friday. I used to do it sometimes, but I don't now; the soap won't spend, the cloth won't wear, and the colors won't stand in the washing, and you'll find it so."

Notwithstanding Uncle Isaac was so busy, he found time every night to look at the hole in the ice where they had made such a slaughter among the geese; but not a goose was to be seen there.

One night, after looking as usual, he said, as he took the glass from his eye, "There are some geese in the water in a little bight of a cove off my pint; they were there last night, just about the same number: it's my opinion that they are some that we wounded in that hole. I've known geese have their wing almost broke off by a shot, to rise and fly some ways, and then it breaks, and they drop into the water. It stands to reason that we must have wounded lots in killing so many; no doubt that many, who were wing-broke, walked off on the ice in the dark, and many, that had one leg broke, flew away, for a goose will rise with one leg broken; but they can't if both are broken. I think, Ben, if you should take the float and go over, you might perhaps get the whole of them. I suppose it is as much as my life's worth to go till this loom's done."

"It certainly is, Uncle Isaac," said Sally.

"Father, let me and John go," cried Charlie.

Ben giving his assent, the boys were soon on their way. As they were not certain the geese were wounded, they lay down in the float, and John began to scull. As they came nearer, the geese, being alarmed, began to swim away in a body, none offering to rise, while one, remaining behind,

dove beneath the surface, and came up again very quickly.

"She is wounded," said John; "they never dive unless they are."

They secured her, and, finding she had both legs broken, killed her. They could have shot the others, but they were exceedingly anxious to secure some alive. As they again approached, another rose with difficulty and a great splashing, and they saw that one leg was broken; they soon tired out and captured her. They pursued two others to the shore, where they ran into the bushes, and endeavored to conceal themselves, and were taken: they shot three more; the rest escaped by swimming ashore, as it was now dark.

"You've got one apiece; give me the broken-legged one," said Uncle Isaac. He made splints, bound up his leg, and made a box to put him in. Charlie bound up the wing of his goose; but as John's was only wounded in the outer joint, he cut the joint off. It is very difficult to distinguish the wild gander from the goose, as they are colored alike, and there is not that difference in appearance as in the male and female of other birds. But Uncle Isaac pronounced Charlie's to be an old gander — very old — by the horny excrecences

on his wings, like a rooster's spur, with which the wild gander will inflict severe blows. He thought John's was a young gander. The boys were sorry for this, for they hoped to get a pair and raise wild geese, but hoped to obtain some more. They made a pen and put them in, but it was a long time before they would eat; finally, they began to eat corn and raw potatoes, and soon became quite tame.

The ice now began to break up and drift about the bay in large sheets and cakes. Ben and Uncle Isaac continued their gunning, killing geese, seals, whistlers, sheldrakes and ducks, on the floating ice-cakes. Meanwhile John and Charlie made sugar with all their might, as the time for operating was now shortened. Instead of one tending the boiler in the daytime, and the other in the night, they made a bed in the camp, and one went to bed at six o'clock, and slept till twelve, when he got up, and the other turned in. The snow also was now diminished in the woods, so that they hauled the sap with the cattle, which lightened their labor very much. They made a large pen on the south side of the camp, where, as it was sheltered by it from the northerly winds, the grass had started up; and in this they put the ganders, where they soon

became so tame that they would eat grass and corn from their hands ; but when they saw the wild geese flying over, and heard them "conking," they were very uneasy.

A short time after this, Captain Rhines got a wounded goose, so that John had a mate for his, but Charlie had to be contented with his wild gander ; he, however, procured a tame goose to keep him company, for fear he would get to the shore some time, and, being lonely, swim away. Never did boys enjoy themselves better ; they had tapped nearly five hundred trees, and, as they were large, and of old growth, which make much more sugar than the second growth, they made from many of them five pounds to a tree.

Sometimes they would shoot a raccoon, or one of them would run down to the mouth of the brook, and shoot a bird. They made an oven out of stones and clay, and baked them with potatoes and roasted clams. Some days there would be an easterly wind, when the sap would scarcely run at all ; and then they would catch fish, and get pork and milk from the house, put slices of pork in the belly of the fish, and bake them.

They made wooden dishes and spoons, borrowed a kettle of Sally, and made clam chowder, and

Charlie even made a pudding; they almost forsook the house, and lived in the camp. Little Ben was very fond of being up there, and eating with them; he thought Charlie's cooking excellent — a great deal better than his mother's.

Sally was about to wean him; so Charlie coaxed him to stay all night at the camp with him and John. He took the cradle up there, and would rock him to sleep, and then put him into the blankets.

Let us take a look at the camp on one of those days when the work did not drive them, and they had leisure to cook; at any rate, when one of them could hunt or cook, while the other attended to the sugar.

The sap will run as long as it freezes nights. The snow is now gone, and the grass springing up in the lee of the camp and woods. The smoke is pouring out of the chimney, where John is tending the kettles. Charlie has been fishing and gunning; he has caught some lobsters and a haddock, and shot a coon, which he is skinning, as it lies on the head of a barrel; the lobsters are at the foot of the tree, upon which the fish are hanging. The kettle, in which the lobsters are to be boiled, is hanging on two crotches, full of water, and a fire

is roaring in the oven. Charlie is going in for a general cook; he intends to boil the lobsters first, then clean the kettle, and make a chowder, bake the coon, and, if he has good luck, invite Ben, Sally, and Uncle Isaac (who adores baked coon) to dine with him.

Uncle Isaac is making a plough for Ben, while Ben is making a harrow.

Charlie has extemporized a table, by driving six stakes in the ground, putting withes on them, and placing boards across them. Ben junior and his kitten are there, the kitten is entreating for a share of the coon, while little Ben is chasing a frog Charlie has given him to play with.

The herons, fish-hawks, and squawks have also come, and are building their nests, and making the air resound with their cries.

Children generally make a great fuss when they are weaned, but Ben thinks it's nice to be weaned; he likes being up to the camp first rate, — a great deal better than being in the house, — for he can dig in the dirt at the roots of the trees, see the squirrels and geese, have frogs to play with, eat all the maple sugar and sirup he wants; and the little rogue knows very well that, when those lobsters are boiled, he shall have a claw to suck, and the

lady sitting in her arm-chair, and have coon to eat. Rainy days, when he can't go up to the camp, he cries half the time for Charlie.

It did not freeze nights now, and the sugar-making season was over; but the boys had a great deal of sirup, which they had partially boiled down (lest it should sour) when the work was driving them, and which they could now boil to sugar at their leisure, without being obliged to sit up nights.

They had worked very hard to make sugar (for it is hard work), and been broken of their rest. John, therefore, has taken his gander, some maple sirup and sugar, and gone home to rest a few days, see the folks, and the wild goose Uncle Isaac told him his father had taken alive.

"Now, Charlie," said Sally, "the sap will run from that yellow birch: the yellow birch is not so forward a tree as the maple, and it is a great deal later before the sap will run from it." Charlie lost no time in tapping the birch, when he found it ran an enormous quantity — three times as much as a maple. He brought the sap to his mother, who put it into a large kettle, and four pounds of sugar to every gallon of sap, and boiled it; when the scum rose, she skimmed it off till it was clear,

then put it in a cask, and, after it worked, it made splendid beer. Charlie was so delighted with it, that he tapped more birches, and had a large quantity made, that he might have it to drink when at work in the summer. He carried some of it to the camp, to drink while he was boiling off his sugar.

John returned in a few days, and after the first greetings were over, Charlie said, "John, I'm going to treat; I always treat my friends when they come to see me." John saw that a wooden shelf had been made, extending across the end of the camp, on which was a large earthen pot and a beautiful calabash scraped so thin you could almost see through it. The rim, ornamented with figures of animals, birds, and negroes dancing fandango under trees, in colors of red, blue, and green. This calabash was a present from Isaac to Charlie; he filled it from the pot, and handed it to John.

"What is it?"

"Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies."

John tasted, then drained it to the bottom, holding out the calabash for more.

"What is it made of?" smacking his lips. "I never tasted anything so good in all my life."

"Guess."

"I can't guess; it's no use to try."

"It's birch sap."

"Birch sap!"

"Yes, birch sap, boxberry leaves, and maple sugar, worked with yeast. Ain't it good?"

"*Good!* I guess it is. I declare, they have the best victuals and drink on Elm Island, the best people live on it, and it's the best place to come to that ever was made."

Having delivered himself of all this, he caught Charlie round the waist, flung him on the floor of the camp, and ran off with his hat. Charlie pursued him, and it ended in a wrestling bout.

Although John was so much stronger than Charlie, and could fling him at the back in a moment, he couldn't do it at arms' length, for Charlie was as lithe as a cat; and once in a great while he would fling John.

"You're a smart fellow, besides being a good boy, Charlie," said John, as they sat down, out of breath; "there ain't a boy around here but what I can twitch on his back in three minutes; but we've wrestled an hour, my shirt is wet through, and I haven't got you down."

This mutual respect which they entertained for each other's physical vigor was a powerful element to cement their friendship. It would have been

impossible for John Rhines to have loved an effeminate boy ; but Charlie, though of finer sensibilities, more gentle, and of a more thoughtful turn than John (who was Rhines all over), was yet grit to the backbone, and, if less inclined to rush into peril, and not so fond of rough sports and hardships, still had no flinch about him when danger came, and might be safely counted on as a backer.

They now finished up the sugar-making, and had over six barrels of sugar, besides a good deal of maple molasses, that drained from the barrels ; and as they had West India sugar enough both at Ben's and Captain Rhines's, they sent a good part of it to the mill for Fred to sell for them.

The readers of Charlie Bell will recollect that a year ago, or more, Charlie cut off a whole parcel of willows by the brook, to see if they would sprout, and grow into a form fit for baskets. "Sallies", he called them. They had now sprouted up luxuriantly into long, slim rods, but they had more or less limbs and knots on them. Charlie said they were as different from the English sallies (osier) as a grafted tree from a wild crab ; that the English basket willow, that grew in the fens, when it was cut off would run up a straight, smooth shoot, just like a bulrush, without a limb on it, only leaves ; that the

leaves were only on the bark, and when that was peeled off, it left a smooth, white rod; whereas these had twigs, and if the twigs were cut off there would be a knot, which would make them rough and brittle; but he meant to peel them when the bark would run, and he thought he could make quite a good basket of them; at any rate, a handsomer one than was ever seen there.

While Uncle Isaac was making the plough, Sally wove her bed-tick, and made it up, with the pillows and bolster, put in the feathers, and Uncle Isaac slept on it, and said he slept first rate.

"I forgot to ask you, John, how your geese come on."

"O, first rate; the one father got is a beauty: uncle says it is certainly a goose, and father says so too."

"How much is she hurt?"

"O, not much of any — just one joint of her wing broke. Father never would have got her in the world, for she could dive and swim like everything, and wouldn't go ashore; but he went and got Tige, and between them both they got her. There's a place in our front yard where the grass comes up first in the spring. I've put them in there, and they are just as loving together as can be."

"I wish I had a pair."

"So do I. Fred told me, if you would come over to the mill, he would give you a pair of ducks."

"Then I'll go to-morrow, for I would give anything to have some young ducks. I think they are the prettiest things in the world."

"Yes, Charlie; and then it is such a nice place to keep them, here in the brook."

"Indeed it is; they can go clear up the brook, the whole length of the island, get bugs and frogs, and then come down to the cove, and pick up whatever there is on the beach — sea-fleas, clam-worms, and little shell-fish, which they swallow whole, just like the sea-ducks. I saw them do it over to Fred's. I've just thought what I can do. I'll carry some maple sugar over, and swap it with Fred's father for corn to keep the ducks on."

That night, at supper, Sally said, "Charlie, if I should go off with Uncle Isaac, do you think you could take care of the baby?"

"Yes, mother."

"But if I should stay all night?"

"That wouldn't make any difference; he has staid with me a good many nights in the camp."

"Well, then, I'll go. Ben, I want some money. I'm going to launch out."

"There it is in the candle-box; help yourself; but what are you going to do with it?"

"I'm going to buy all the woollen, cotton, and linen yarn I can lay hands on; I've got a loom at last, and I'm going ahead; we want sheets, quilts, clothes and curtains; the house is as bare as a beggar's press. It will be a good while before we shall have wool and flax of our own. It takes too long to get the wool and flax, and then card and spin it." The wool and cotton in that day was all carded by hand. "I can weave all the cloth we want while I should be doing that."

"Well, Sally, don't kill yourself because you have got a loom; there's reason in all things."

"Hannah has got a little woollen yarn to spare," said Uncle Isaac, "and I heard Mary Griffin say that she had some linen warp she was going to send to Salem by the packet, and I know Aunt Molly Bradish has got some woollen yarn, for she always has, and we've got any quantity of flax and you can get some of the girls to spin and bleach it for you before you will want it."

"If I can get it spun," replied Sally, "I had rather bleach it myself at the brook: just as soon as it is warm enough, I'm going to have my tubs under that yellow birch, and wash my clothes, and

scour my yarn in the shade of it, where I can hear the brook run. I admire to hear a brook run. Don't you remember, the day you brought me on here, Uncle Isaac, I told you I meant to have my tub under that birch? Well, that's my tree as much as the great maple is Charlie's."

"I must go early to-morrow morning," said Uncle Isaac.

"I will have an early breakfast," replied Sally, "and the next afternoon I want some of you to come after me."

"I'll come, mother," said Charlie, "and then I can bring my ducks over."

"Uncle Isaac," said Ben, "I want to buy a fat ox to kill for raising: who's got one?"

"Joe Merrithew. One of his got drowned this winter; walked off on the ice, and fell in; and he's fatted the other one; he's rising seven feet."

"Well, tell him I want him, and ask him to keep him for me."

"I guess you calculate to have something to eat at your raising."

"I calculate I do, and to drink too, and a ring wrestle, and a real good time."

"Who do you calculate is going to name the frame?"

“Joe Griffin. By the way, they say that Joe is likely to lose the championship.”

“Why so?”

“Because there’s a man at Saccarappa, by the name of Babb, that has thrown everybody around. He wrestled at North Yarmouth, Christmas, and flung everybody they could bring on; and the story is, that they ransacked three towns, and could not find a man who could heave him; he’s heard about Joe, and wants to get hold of him, and if he hears of the raising he’ll come.”

“Well, I hope he will.”

“I intend to raise the tenth of May. I put it off till then because there will be so many of us we shall have to eat out doors, and it will be warm enough by that time.”

“It will take a hundred men to raise that barn safely.”

“Yes; and I mean to invite them to stop all night, board it, and have the fun the second day.”

It must be remembered that the barn was to be large, and the timbers of buildings at that day were of enormous size; the sills of Ben’s barn were ten by twelve inches, and the plates, beams, and girths in proportion; besides, they did not

make use of any of the mechanical appliances of the present day; but up it went, a broadside at once, by sheer muscular strength and activity. To be smart on a frame was considered a great accomplishment, and many were injured for life by hard lifts at raising, but not half so many as are nowadays by doing nothing, or by effeminate pleasures and pursuits.

As Uncle Isaac was shoving off, Ben said, "I expect you to invite the people; ask everybody to come that can eat, drink, and lift, for the first day, and everybody that likes to have a good time, and see a ring wrestle, the second."

John and Charlie parted very reluctantly.

"How I wish you could stay here all summer, John!"

"So do I; but perhaps we enjoy as much as though we were together all the time. I enjoy thinking of it beforehand. I am as happy as can be when the time comes, and then it lasts me three or four weeks to think about afterwards. We've got a cow we call Cherry; she's the best creature that ever was—gives a lot of milk, and milks easy. I learned to milk on her. Sometimes, when she's lying down in the grass under a tree, chewing her cud, I go and lie down beside her:

there she'll lie with her eyes half shut, and chew, chew, and seem as if she was so happy: that's just the way I do. I go to work hoeing or chopping, or doing something alone, after I have been over here, and I chew it all over again, as the old cow does her cud."

Thus chatting, they pulled along till they reached Captain Rhines's cove. Charlie saw John's geese, and they went together to the mill. Charlie bartered the sap sugar with Mr. Williams for corn, and had his pick out of sixty ducks, taking the pair he liked best.

It was quite a difficult matter to decide. Fred thought one pair were the handsomest, and Charlie and John differed in respect to two other pairs; finally they left it out to Mr. Williams.

They spent the forenoon, and dined with Fred; then all got into the canoe, and went over to Captain Rhines's cove. When they landed, John said, with an air of great mystery, "Now, boys, I want you to go with me." He took a hoe, and giving to each of them a shovel, they went out into the field.

"I know what it is," said Fred; "he's found a fox's den, and is going to dig him out."

But John made no reply. They came to a level spot in the field, where a square stone was set up in the ground, for all the world like a gravestone. John pulled up the stone, and the boys began to dig; the ground was sandy and easily dug. When they had got down three feet, Fred cried, "Here is some straw."

"Let me dig now," said John. He carefully scraped the sand from the straw with the hoe, when, removing the straw, the boys beheld, to their astonishment, a whole pile of the largest red and russet apples they had ever seen.

"A hoard!" cried Fred. "O, John, where did you get such great apples? What bouncers!"

"We raised the russets, and Uncle Isaac gave me the red-cheeked ones."

"How long have they been there?" asked Charlie.

"Ever since last November: that's the way to keep things, I tell you; if I had put them in the cellar, and hadn't eaten them up, half of them would have rotted."

The boys sat down on the ground and began to eat, while John went to the house and brought a basket.

"When are you going to have your raising, Charlie?" asked Fred.

"The tenth of May, and you are invited."

"I expect it will be a great time."

"I guess it will, and the greatest wrestle there has been for years and years."

"Are you going to wrestle, John?" asked Fred.

"Yes, I suppose I shall, if any boys wrestle."

"Sam Chase thinks he can throw you."

"Well, there's different opinions about that. I think he'll have to eat a good many more puddings before he can do it. I threw him last town meeting, and mudded both his shoulders."

"But he's learned a new trip since that: there was a fellow here from Nova Scotia learned him. Are you going to wrestle, Charlie?"

"I suppose I shall if you and John do. I don't go to school as you do; so I don't have any chance to know anything about the boys round here. I should be afraid to take hold of them. I expect any of them could throw me."

"No, they can't; for you can throw me, and once in a while you throw John, at arms' length, and we can throw all the rest of them."

"O, I tell you what I mean to do," said John.

"I mean to go and wrestle with Uncle Isaac,— he's a great wrestler,— and get him to learn me some trips, and then challenge a man."

"I would, John," said Fred. "Do you suppose your Ben will wrestle?"

"No; there's nobody would dare take hold of him: father says, the last time he wrestled, he struck a man's leg with his foot, and broke it like a pipe-stem."

"Charlie says this town is like to lose the championship; that there's a fellow coming from way off somewhere, that will certainly throw Joe Griffin."

"I had rather see it done than hear tell of it," said John; "but even if he should, the town wouldn't lose its honor, for Ben would take hold of him, and fling him over the moon."

"Let's have a wrestle now," said Charlie: "we shall want all the practice we can get before raising."

They spent the rest of the afternoon in wrestling.

"Uncle Isaac says that the Indians put bear's grease on their joints to make them limber," said Charlie; "let us get him to give us some, and put it on, the night before raising."

The boys took supper together at Captain Rhines's. Charlie and Sally then went home, with plenty of apples, white oak acorns, and beech nuts, and some winter pears, that were buried up with the apples.

"Those pears," said John, as he put them into the boat, "were as hard as flints in the fall."

It was difficult to tell which was most delighted, Sally with her yarn, or Charlie with his ducks and apples, for he had a perfect rage for pets of all kinds. He also had one great advantage, living on a small island, for if he had any wild animals, they could not escape to a great distance; and any wild game could never increase to be troublesome, or get out of the reach of a gun or dog.

I wish you could have seen Charlie, when he put the ducks into the brook, after their long confinement in the canoe. The moment they found themselves at liberty, and in the water, without ever casting a look at the beauty of the island, down they went to the bottom, standing on their heads, and up they came, each with a mouthful of Elm Island soil; and then standing bolt upright,

they made the water fly with their wings, and went quack, quack.

Charlie was delighted, and sat up half the night to make a house for them, in which he shut them every night, and did not let them out in the morning till the duck had laid an egg. As soon as he had a dozen eggs, he set them under a hen (he couldn't wait for more), and kept the old duck laying.

Ben and Charlie now began to make preparations for the raising: they built a rough shed, and made board tables under it for those to eat from whom the house would not hold; they also went carefully over the wrestling ground, and picked up every stone and stick, and removed every bunch of hard earth that might injure any one in falling. A few days beforehand, they went to the main land, procured the ox, drove him to Captain Rhines's barn, killed and dressed him, and brought the meat on in Ben's big canoe.

The rest of the time was occupied in making long poles, with an iron in the end, to push the frame up with, when it was out of reach of the hand. They were of large size, that a number of men might lift with them at once. They also prepared large spars, called "spur-shores," which were

chained by one end to the ends of the posts and the middle of the plate, the other end resting on the ground to hold it as it went up, and after the broadsides were up, while the end beams were put in and pinned. All was thus completed by way of preparation.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RAISING.

ONE morning, as Sally made Charlie's bed, she found the blankets and sheets saturated with grease, and, wondering at it, asked Charlie what it meant; when it appeared, that learning from Uncle Isaac that the Indians put bear's grease on their limbs to make them supple, the boys had procured it, saturated rags with it, and tied them around the joints of their thighs, knees, and ankles, when they went to bed, that they might be in prime order for the wrestle, which they knew would come off at the raising.

"Why, Charlie," said she, "I shouldn't think such a nice, particular creature as you, would do such a trick as that."

"Well, mother, John and Fred are going to do it, and I didn't want to be beat at the wrestle."

"Well, beat at the wrestle or not, I won't have such work with my bed-clothes; and the next thing it will be on my new tick."

“Well, mother, I’ll go up to the sap-camp and sleep, and then I can have as much bear’s grease as I want.”

And that he actually did.

The night preceding the day appointed for the raising, Uncle Isaac brought over the Rhines and Hadlock girls, who were to assist Sally in cooking. Soon after the sun rose, the next morning, the people began to come over in canoes, followed by the *Perseverance*, with all the men that could stand on her deck, and several canoes in tow.

Uncle Isaac and Ben had previously put the broadsides together, in a condition to take right hold of. All who came, with the exception of the boys, were strong, sinewy men: a noble looking crowd they were; among whom our old friend and shipmate Flour loomed up like a man-of-war among a fleet of merchantmen, head and shoulders above the rest. The noble-spirited black was jocund with the prospect of good cheer, and greatly elated that Ben had sent him a special invitation to be present; while Sally had invited his “ole woman” (as he termed his better half) to assist her in the preparations of the feast.

“Wouldn’t I like to have such an arm as that!” said Charlie, gazing with admiration upon the

black, and trying in vain to clasp his wrist. Uncle Isaac, who was, as usual, the presiding genius, now began to marshal his men. With that instinct which leads powerful men to get together, Ben, John Strout, and Joe were all at one corner.

"Stop! that will never do," said Uncle Isaac: "all you big fellows in a heap! Here, Ben, you, and Joe, and John, take the western corner, and let them have Flour and the Merrithews on the eastern one. You've got to lift now, I tell you, for it's a master heavy frame. We'll make two lifts of it; take it breast high, then take breath, and up with it. Are you all ready, men?"

"Ready," was the reply.

"Well, say when you're mad."

"Mad," shouted Joe Griffin.

"Up with him, breast high."

Up went the great mass of timber, with a shout, breast high, while the boys propped it with shores, that they might take breath.

"Be ready with your pike-poles, boys; up with him."

Placing their shoulders beneath the corner and middle posts, and applying the pike-poles, as the frame was elevated beyond the reach of their hands, it rose slowly, but with extreme difficulty,

for the timber was of enormous size, and it was difficult for men enough to get hold to lift to advantage.

"Lift," shouted Uncle Isaac, "till the *sparks* fly out of your *eyes*; it must go up: if it comes back, it will kill the whole of us."

By dint of severe effort, it at length stood erect, in which position it was secured by braces and stay laths. The remaining broadside was now raised to a position nearly erect, where it was held by spur-shores, to permit of being inclined, in order to enter the girths and beams of the ends.

The young men now sprang like squirrels upon the broadsides, that trembled in the air, in order to enter and fasten the ends of the braces and timbers, that were lifted up to them by those below. Men were clinging to all parts of the broadsides, already raised, with a broadaxe in one hand and pins in the other, and walking along timbers that quivered on the pike-poles of those beneath, or hanging with their breast over a timber, to enter the end of a beam, or girth. On every side resounded the cry, "Three with a witness," "Four with a witness," "Brace number four," "Brace number five," "Give beam," "Rack off," "Rack to."

The timbers of the roof were now raised, and a bottle of liquor being procured, Joe Griffin broke it upon the ridge-pole, having first delivered himself of a poetic effusion, full of humor and sly hits, which was received with shouts, and pronounced first rate.

The crowning banquet was reserved till after the conclusion of the wrestle on the second day; but a bountiful collation was provided, and liquor distributed in moderate quantities, coffee being a luxury reserved till the last meal, as an enormous quantity was required for so many; but thanks to Captain Rhines, and the Ark, coffee was plenty on Elm Island. After they had eaten, rested, and chatted a while, they began to put on the boards. Ben having cut the logs, of which his boards were made, according to the dimensions of the building, there was, consequently, but very little cutting and fitting to be done, and the work went on apace, pressed by so many strong and willing hands, and led by Uncle Isaac and Joe Griffin.

While the rest were at work upon the walls and roof, under the lead of Joe, Uncle Isaac, taking Ben, John, Fred Williams, and Charlie, proceeded to lay the barn floor. He first laid a loose floor of boards, then tongued the planks, which were thor-

oughly seasoned, set them up together tight enough to pinch a hair, and built a bulkhead at the sides, in order to keep the grain in the threshing-floor from flying into the ground, mow, or cattle place.

"There," said he, when it was done, "I'll bet a cow, that not a kernel of grain, or even a grass seed, gets through that floor."

They now were assisted by some of the others, and laid the floor in the tie-up for the cattle, and made the manger and stantials for them. The barn was now in a situation to receive the hay: to be sure, the doors were not made; but they could put up boards for a while, and the roof was not shingled; but then a roof, boarded in the old-fashioned way, up and down, will not in the summer admit much water, although there's not a shingle on it.

"This is a first-rate barn," said Uncle Isaac—"a good frame, and well covered. You can soon shingle the south side, and that will keep all the hay and grain safe, that you will have to put in it; and you can shingle the rest at your leisure. But there's a good many of us here, and we had rather work than not; and as there's stuff enough to work with, I should like to do one thing."

"What is that?" asked Ben.

"Well, you won't always want your front room used as a work-shop; now, here is more barn room than you will need for some years, and I should like to part off a piece of the ground mow, lay a floor, make a bench, and put up a rack for tools."

"I," said Joe, "should like to do another job: here is a crowd of us, and it's some time to night. I should like to put up the staging to shingle this barn, and then it would be ready when wanted."

"You may do anything you like," said Ben; "but it appears to me you have done enough, and more than enough."

Joe then headed a gang who went into the woods, cut down trees for the stage poles, trimmed them out, and taking them on their shoulders, formed a long line, and at the word of command from Seth Warren, they marched to the barn, and, going round it, dropped their poles. To raise them, nail on the brackets, and put on the boards, was but a few minutes' work for so many.

While Uncle Isaac was laying the floor, which was put down without being jointed, Robert Yelf and others made a bench with a draw in it, brought the wooden vice from the house and put

on it, made shelves, and had them all ready to put up when the floor was laid.

“Don’t do any more, Uncle Isaac, I beg of you,” said Charlie. “I want to have a good time doing all these things myself, now that I have got tools, and there will be nothing left for me to do.”

While the men were smoking, chatting, and telling stories, after the day’s work was over, the boys amused themselves talking, and watching the ducks that were playing in the little basin where the brook was bridged by the root of the great elm.

“Isn’t that drake a beauty?” asked Charlie. He had green on the top of his head, a white breast, and a little patch of green on the side of his neck, as though a brush full of paint had fallen on it; and his back and wings were mottled with beautiful brown, shading into pure white.

CHAPTER X.

JOEL RICKER AND THE LION OF ELM ISLAND.

WHEN the morrow came, bright and fair, many more boats began to arrive at the island. The *Perseverance*, going over to the main land, returned with a very different crowd of people from those who came to the raising. Those were all young, sinewy men, or strong men in middle life; no boys save John, Fred, and Henry Griffin. But these consisted of Captain Rhines, his wife, the minister, the Merrithews, Pettigrews, old Uncle Jonathan Smullen, many other old white-haired men, who had been tough wrestlers in their day, great bony frames, and a crowd of boys, all eager to wrestle and partake of the good cheer; and the boys were in hopes that Lion Ben would do something, one of whom gravely told his mates that he could lift the broadside of the barn alone.

It was late in the forenoon before all arrived; in the mean while, seats were placed alongside the barn floor, leaving the middle clear, that it might

be used to "pull up." Planks were laid on logs and pieces of timber around the wrestling ground. All now, apparently without any previous concert, began to draw together at the wrestling ground, and sitting upon the seats or standing in little knots, to talk about wrestling bouts they had witnessed. The elderly people gathered about Captain Rhines, Smullen, and old Barney Weaver, who were telling of the great wrestlers they had known and seen matched against each other. While these veterans were stirring the slumbering fires in the bosoms of the young, Uncle Isaac, giving John Rhines the wink, took him, Fred, and Charlie aside, and said, —

"Come, can't you boys start something?"

"I know," replied John, "that Sam Chase has come here to-day calculating to throw me; as sure as I go into the ring, he will hold back till I've wrestled with seven or eight, and am pretty well blown, and then take hold of me. If he should throw me when I was tired, and he was fresh, he would go away and brag about it through three towns."

"That's true, John. I don't blame you. I should feel just so myself; no one likes to be taken advantage of. You begin, Charlie; go into the ring and stump somebody."

“I don’t want to, Uncle Isaac. I’m a stranger here. I don’t know any of these boys, nor how they wrestle: they wrestle different here from what they do where I came from; besides, I don’t think it would look well in me at all. It would look like Joe Bradish, who, I have heard say, when the house was raised, stumped all creation to pull him up, and you flung him over your head. The boys would say, ‘How grand that Englishman feels! We’ll take the starch out of him; we’ll bring him to his bearings.’ I’m sure I don’t want to set them all against me, the very first going off.”

“I’m sure I don’t know what we shall do: it’s just so with the men — one is afraid, and the other darsen’t. If we don’t begin, we sartain shan’t go on.”

“I’ll begin,” said Fred. “I haven’t any particular reason, as John and Charlie have.”

Stepping into the midst of the ground, he flung up his cap, and said, “Who wants to wrestle?”

“I,” cried Sam Pratt, before the sentence was fairly finished. Sam was soon thrown, and four or five more; when Fred, thinking he had done enough, left the ground.

Charlie took his place, and threw boy after boy

who presented themselves, winning golden opinions; and expressions of approbation could be heard all around, to the great delight of John and Fred, as well as of Uncle Isaac, Ben, and Sally.

"That's a smart boy," said one.

"Ay, and a modest," said another; "and he wrestles fair."

"He's handsome as a picture," said the girls.

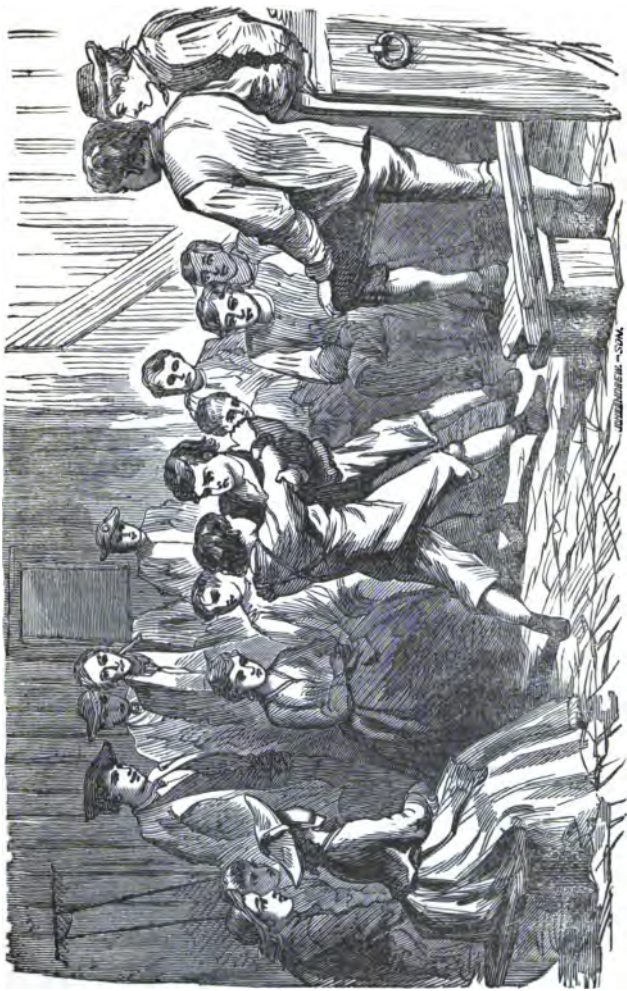
"He's limber as an eel," said Jonathan Smullen. "He'll make a great wrestler when he gets his strength; and they say he's a real good boy to work, and 'bidable,' and handy with tools."

Henry Griffin, a brother of Joe, now entered the ring. He was much larger and stronger than Charlie. Expressions of concern were now heard all around the ring.

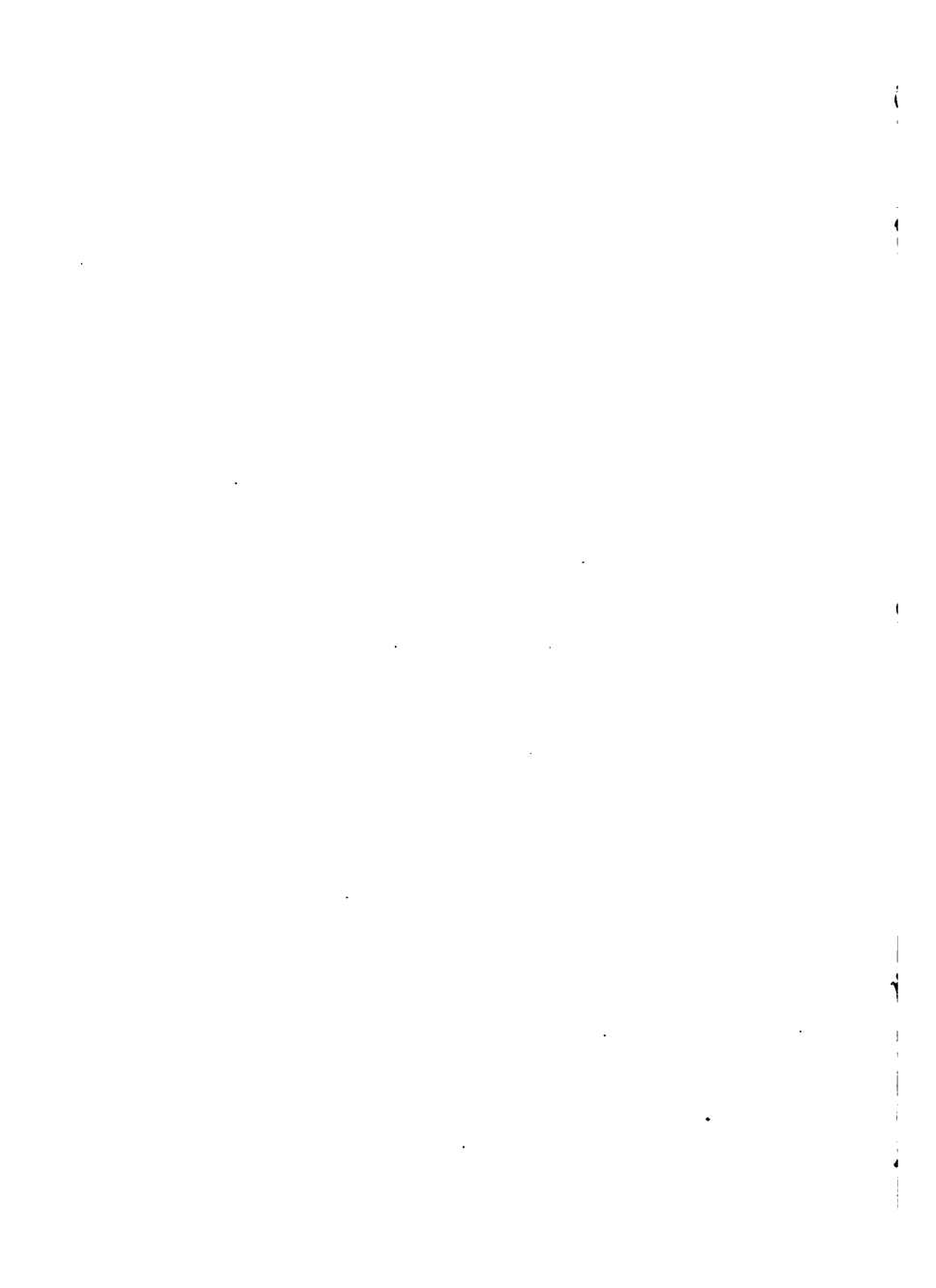
"O, dear," said Mary Rhines, "there is that great Henry Griffin. I'm afraid Charlie will be thrown, those Griffins are all so strong, and such great wrestlers; why, he's as big as two of him."

"I'm sure I hope he won't," said old Barney Weaver, who was not exempt from the general sympathy; "it can't make much difference to Henry if he is thrown; but it would be hard for this young stranger."

The contest was long and close: they tugged



CHARLIE IN THE RING. — Page 136.



and strained knee to knee, and shook each other. Henry twitched Charlie to his knees; but so great was his agility — owing, no doubt, to the bear's grease — that he recovered, and at length flung Henry upon his back. Satisfied with his laurels, and not caring to risk them further, Charlie now left the ring, and received the warm congratulations of his friends. He blushed like a girl as Uncle Isaac shook him by the hand, and complimented him before the whole.

The ball was now fairly in motion: everybody's blood was up. The moment Charlie left the ring, John Rhines stepped into it, where he was instantly followed by Sam Chase. This contest excited the most intense interest among the boys, for John was the champion of the boys, and a universal favorite, while Sam was not much liked, being selfish and assuming, and had made his brags that John Rhines had got to kiss the ground this time. The game, however, met with a most singular interruption. Tige Rhines had come to the raising by special invitation, and sat between Captain Rhines's knees, regarding the sports with great gravity; but the moment Chase laid his hand upon John's shoulder, he leaped upon him with every hair erect, bore him to the ground, and, had not

John flung himself upon him, would have torn his throat open in an instant.

Chase rose as pale as ashes, and trembling in every limb. The dog was shut up, and after Chase had recovered himself, the contest began; he manifested a great deal of caution, and stood off to keep his legs out of the way of John's trip, and also of a cross buttock, for which John, by reason of his uncommon strength, was celebrated. John, to punish him, and make him stand up to the work, twitched him, and pressed down his shoulders by main force, so as almost to overbalance his body and throw him forward.

"I guess," said Joe Dorset, "that John will lose his feathers this time."

"What'll you bet of that?" said Henry Griffin.

"I'll bet my two-bladed knife, that's got the corkscrew in it, that Sam throws him."

"I'll bet my big powder horn, full of powder, he don't."

Sam now tried the trip he had learned of the Nova Scotia man, but was foiled, and came near being thrown.

John now showed that he knew some sleights: in his turn he pushed violently against Sam's breast, as though he would press him over back-

ward. Chase naturally resisted, pushing in the opposite direction, when John, suddenly leaping back, twitched him on to his back with such force that his heels flew up in the air. A shout of exultation burst from the boys. Chase refused to give his hand to John, but left the ring, saying he should have come off victor if the dog had not made him nervous; and he was mean enough to say afterwards, that what was a pure accident was a contrived plan on the part of John and his friends; but nobody believed it.

"There goes your knife, Joe," said Henry, as Chase fell; "but I shan't take it. I'm satisfied that Chase is thrown."

"I don't like these people that go round telling what they are going to do. Somebody must clear this boy out of the ring," said Uncle Isaac; "there are no more boys to wrestle with him, and the ring belongs to him as long as he can keep it."

"I suppose it might as well be me as anybody," said Joe Bradish, with his usual conceit; but to his infinite mortification John laid him on his back, amid the shouts of the whole company, and the jubilant mirth of the boys, and instantly left the ring.

Extravagantly elated at the success of their

champion, the boys procured evergreen and May flowers from the pasture, and crowned him.

It was now afternoon. Flour, who had the ring, had thrown every one who opposed him, and there remained only Joe Griffin, John Strout, and three or four others of much rate as wrestlers. A canoe was seen approaching the island containing two persons. Ben, looking at them with the glass, said, "The man rowing is John Wingate; the one sitting in the stern is a stranger. Joe, I shouldn't wonder if that's the man that's coming to try your mettle."

"Well, I'm ready for him."

In a short time, the stranger, accompanied by Wingate, approached. He was a splendid specimen of physical strength combined with activity; upwards of six feet, weighing, apparently, about two hundred,—evidently accustomed to severe labor, and without superfluous flesh. The assembly, so well accustomed to judge of men by their thews and sinews, gazed upon him with admiration.

"By Heavens," said Barney Weaver, "there goes a game-cock for you; see how light he steps; look at his legs."

"And his arms," said Captain Rhines.

"See how he's timbered about the breast and shoulders," said Smullen; "he's hard-meated, too; that man has been brought up to hard work; none of your brash, white-livered fellows. I shouldn't wonder if he might be a match for Ben."

"No, he ain't," said Uncle Isaac, as he stepped forward to greet the stranger; "*that* man don't draw the breath of life."

There was but one element that tended to neutralize the favorable impression the fine proportions of the visitor were calculated to make; to wit, a certain air of assumption manifested in his looks, and which became extremely offensive the moment he opened his lips to speak, and soon dissipated the favorable impression produced by his evident physical power.

"Is this Elm Island?" asked he of Uncle Isaac.

"It is."

"Does a man by the name of Benjamin Rhines (Lion Ben, it is said they call him) live here?"

"Right again."

"Well, I belong in Waterboro'; we reckon we raise the smartest men in our place that ever went into a ring. I'm the bully in our town to wrestle, lift, chop, jump, or pull up. My name is Ricker—Joel Ricker. Most likely you've heard of me."

"I never heard of you, nor your town either," replied Uncle Isaac, whose modest nature revolted at such assumption. "We don't know much about people or places way back in the bush; you say you are a great wrestler: where have you wrestled?"

"Wal, most everywhere. I wrestled at Stroudwater last town meeting day, and threw their bully the next day at a launching at Portland, and everybody they brought on. I wrestled a fortnight ago at Saccarappa. There was a man there by the name of Babb, who had thrown everybody in those parts, and they thought couldn't be thrown; we agreed to wrestle twice, and I threw him both times. They kept me all night, and sent to Gorham, Black Point, among the Libbys, and to North Yarmouth, and fetched in their men. I threw them all the next day, and they gave me a dinner. I've heard there's a man lives here, by the name of Rhines, very powerful, and a great wrestler. I don't believe the man treads the ground that can throw me, pull up with me, or handle me in any way; if there is, I should like to see him."

"Well, friend, you have come to the right place, and can be accommodated. That little flat there

is just the place where you will lie on your back, and there's the man (pointing to Ben) who can put you there, before or after breakfast."

The stranger walked up to Ben, who was sitting on a low seat among the rest, all down in a heap, his hands clasped over his knees, and his chin resting upon them, looking for all the world like a squat toad, and said, "Are you Benjamin Rhines?"

"I am."

"I wish you would be good enough to stand up."

Upon this Ben uncoiled himself. The other viewed him very narrowly, and in silence; he evidently, in all his intercourse with men of might and muscle, had never met with *such* a specimen before.

"You're not a very handsome man, that's sartin," he said at length. "I reckon you're a somewhat heavier man than what I am, but no great."

"He don't like the looks of them little shoulders," said Barney Weaver.

"Will you wrestle with me, Mr. Rhines?"

"Friend Ricker," replied Ben, "I'm neither a bully nor a wrestler; I haven't been in a ring since I was nineteen; I don't go about boasting of my

strength, but use it to get my living, and help my neighbors. I don't care if there are fifty people in the state, or county, stouter than I am; if you are a man with a family, or not, you had better be at home planting or chopping, than running about the country to find some one to wrestle with."

"Is Ben going to back out and disgrace us all?" whispered Joe to Uncle Isaac.

"Ben knows what he's about: that chap will rue the day he came to Elm Island; he will be no more in Ben's hand than a mouse in the claws of a cat."

The singular reply of Ben was instantly attributed by Ricker, who was flushed with recent success, to fear.

"I didn't come here to meeting," said he, "but to a ring wrestle, where people come to see who is the best man. If you are afraid to take hold of me, say so; here are witnesses that you have had a fair challenge."

"When I was younger, and foolish," replied Ben, in his drawling way, "I used to lift, wrestle, and jump for the sport or the honor of the thing; but of late years I have felt it to be wrong to waste time and strength in that way, and never do anything now except for a consideration. What

would you be willing to give me to lay you on your back within four feet, or four and a half, of any spot you may select?"

This proposition, made in Ben's moderate way, and with the greatest gravity, was received by the crowd with roars of laughter.

"Call you this handsome treatment of a stranger?" asked Ricker. "Up our way, when a stranger comes among us to join our games, we treat him civilly, give him a fair chance, and take pride in doing it."

"So do we when they come in a proper manner, and are not too big for their breeches. Now, how do you want to wrestle?"

"At arms' length."

Ricker, divesting himself of his outer clothing, now stepped into the ring. Ben didn't even take off his jacket.

"Ain't you going to strip?" said his opponent.

"I don't think there will be any occasion;" and, stepping up to his man, he seized him by both arms, just above the elbows, pinioning them to his side. Vainly he threw himself back and forth, wriggled and twisted, and exerted his great strength to the utmost. The terrible power of his antagonist held him as in a vice.

"Now, friend," said Ben, "if you'll have the goodness to say where you'll be laid, I'll put you there."

Poor Ricker's face flushed, alternately red and white; at length, entirely overcome by the ridicule of the crowd, and a sense of utter helplessness, he forgot his manhood, and burst into tears. Ben instantly relinquished his hold: the discomfited bully sat down on a log, and hid his face in his hands, while the others went to talking among themselves, to hide his confusion. At length, rising up quickly, he rushed up to Ben, and placing both hands on his shoulders, exclaimed, "Are you flesh and blood, like the rest of us, or something more than belongs to this world?"

"Flesh and blood, certainly," said Ben; "but the Almighty, in making me homely, and almost a monster, as you see, has given me a strength which I have always striven not to abuse, and never have, except when my temper has got the better of me."

"Well, I'll go and hang myself, for I shall never dare to hold up my head in our town again."

Uncle Isaac now assumed the task of consolation.

"Don't take it so to heart, friend. I have no

doubt, nor any one here, but that you are a master strong man, and a noble wrestler; every man must expect to meet with his betters, sooner or later. We are going to jump, and pull up; stop and take part with us; take supper, and wash down all unkindness with a little spirit."

After some hesitation, the stranger fell in with this kind and sensible advice. They adjourned to the barn-floor, to pull up; when Ricker pulled up every man except Flour, and beat the whole at both a running and standing jump, Ben not taking part in these games: he, however, gave one singular exhibition of strength and hard-handedness. He put a silver dollar on the first and third fingers of his left hand; then, placing the second finger on the dollar, he struck the finger with the fist of his right hand with such force as to bend the dollar.

A bountiful supper was now provided, and liquor freely distributed. Ricker, somewhat relieved from his mortification by his after triumphs, and elated with good cheer, sang several songs in excellent style, and greatly to the satisfaction of the company.

At this closing repast many were so much the worse for liquor as to be carried on board the

schooner, and John Strout was unable to navigate his vessel, which was taken in charge by Uncle Isaac.

Joel Ricker went home with Uncle Isaac, and departed the next day, a sadder and a wiser man for his attempt to beard the Lion of Elm Island.

CHAPTER XI.

A CLAP OF THUNDER IN A CLEAR SKY.

FRED and John remained on the island all night. When the boys had retired, — being unable to sleep after the excitement of the day, — they lay and talked over its occurrences.

“John, you don’t know how glad I was to see you throw Sam Chase,” said Charlie. “Joe Dorset told me that he had told all the boys he was sure to heave you, because he had learned a new trip; but what made you think of that way of twitching him: didn’t he come down with a vengeance! I thought you’d broke his neck.”

“Uncle Isaac learnt it to me. I tell you Uncle Isaac knows the ropes. I’ll bet he would have thrown Ricker, old as he is: father says there was nobody could wrestle with him, till Ben came up.”

“I think,” said Fred, “the greatest fun was to see Tige go into him; every hair on him stood right up straight; he was as big as three Tiges; he would

have torn his throat open in a minute, if Ben had not grabbed him."

"I forgot all about him," said John, "or I should have shut him up: he won't allow anybody to lay the weight of their fingers on me."

"Wasn't it comical, after what Ricker had bragged he could do, to see him standing up there, not able to move, and father holding him, as a cat would a mouse; and when father asked him how much he would give him to lay him on his back, O, what a shout that made!"

"There was a good deal louder shout," said Fred, "when John threw Joe Bradish. If he had thrown you, John, nothing would have been thought of it, for it would be expected that a man would throw a boy."

"I think," said John, "Charlie went ahead of me, altogether. I had no idea he would throw Hen Griffin. Joe Bradish is a great clumsy creature, but Henry is a smart, withy fellow, and a Griffin to boot, and they are all born wrestlers."

"Why didn't *you* keep in the ring, Fred?" asked Charlie: "you threw everybody you took hold of."

"Because I knew, if I did, I should have to set to with you, and I thought, perhaps, we shouldn't like each other so well, or there might be some

hardness got up between us, if we threw each other at a ring wrestle."

"You are a noble-hearted fellow, Fred," said he; and then this committee of mutual admiration dissolved themselves in sleep.

The next day was occupied in putting matters to rights, taking down the booth and tables, from which the multitude had eaten, clearing out the front room, and putting Charlie's West India woods, tools, shaving-horse, shingles, and other trumpery, into the new workshop in the barn, to the great joy of Sally, who immediately cleaned it up, and moved in her loom and spinning-wheel, which she was obliged to have in the kitchen before.

An event now occurred which brought a bitter pang to the heart of Ben and his wife, and, in the providence of God, gave a new direction to their character. Ben saw, on going to the beach the following morning, a great number of boats and men off Uncle Isaac's point, and, taking the glass, perceived that they were grappling for something on the bottom, and that numbers of men and women were watching their operations from the shore. Pulling over in his canoe, he arrived at the spot just as his father and Seth Warren drew the body of John Strout from the water, and laid it on the

thwarts of the boat, a livid and swollen corpse — he who, two days before, had been the life of that merry company. It was noticed by all that he had drunk too freely on the closing night of the raising, and when the parties reached the main land, he was left on board his schooner — which was anchored a short distance from the shore — to sleep off the effects of the liquor. In the morning his canoe was found adrift, and half full of water. It was supposed that, in attempting to follow the rest on shore, he had fallen overboard; and search being made, he was found, as we have narrated.

John Strout was a noble-hearted man, a resolute, industrious person, and universally liked by both old and young. He was possessed of rare judgment in all nautical affairs, was an excellent navigator, could cut and fit a gang of rigging, cut and make a suit of sails, and was a first-rate carpenter.

He was about the age of Ben: they had been friends from childhood, and went three voyages together. Owing, perhaps, to Ben's influence over him, which was very great, he was never guilty of any breach of morality, except that sometimes at a raising or husking, or when in foreign parts, he

would get the worse for liquor. But in those days, when everybody drank, that was considered a small matter.

Ben gazed a moment at the livid features of the dead, and without uttering a word returned. Sally, who had been looking through the glass in his absence, and saw the boats all draw together, met him at the shore. Shocked at the agony visible in his features, she exclaimed, "Ben, what has happened! Who is dead?"

"John Strout; and he died drunk, from liquor that I gave him; and what has become of his soul I tremble to think."

He sat down upon the head-board of the canoe, and covered his face with his hands, while the hot tears ran through his fingers. Sally sat down beside him, and her tears mingled with his; for she had known John from childhood, and entertained a sincere friendship for him. She at length ventured to break the silence by saying, "I don't think you ought to look at it in that light, Ben: you did not give it to him to do him an injury, but in kindness. He was a man, able to judge for himself; and if he took too much, it was his fault, not yours."

"Sally," replied her husband, — almost with

fierceness, — “John and I have been together, at sea or on shore, ever since we were big enough to go alone, and there never was a hard word or thought between us. I never saw anything so dangerous that he wouldn’t undertake it with me. I had all power over him. I knew it, and it kept me from doing a great many things that young men do, and which I might have done, because I knew he would follow my lead. That knowledge ought to have kept me from drinking liquor. I knew his weakness, and that while I could drink one, two, or three glasses, and stop at the score, he could not. He came on here, brought the crew that put up this house, and was as much interested as though it had been his own: he stood up with us when we were married; yes, and he got the liquor that brought him to his death at my house, and from my hands. I never tried to prevent him from drinking; and now he is dead, and his blood is on my conscience, if it is not on my hands. The last drop of spirit in the house was drank at the raising. It is the last that shall ever cross my lips, or that I will give to my friends, except they are sick.”

“O, Ben,” said Sally, “you are going too far now; only think of what you say. Everybody,

your father, mother, and the minister, all admit that spirit is good, used in moderation. Don't you remember how vexed your father was when John refused to drink with him, when he first went home, and he found that Uncle Isaac had persuaded him and Charlie to promise not to drink? I've seen my mother, a hundred times, mix a little Holland gin and loaf sugar, and set it down to the fire to warm for the minister. How would you feel if Uncle Isaac, Uncle Sam, or even Mr. Welch, should come, and you should not offer them any spirit? They would think we were mean, and go away and talk about us."

"I have thought of all these things, and in view of them, as I looked upon John's dead body, made up my mind; my conscience tells me I am right — I shall not change it."

"Well, Ben, if you think it is right to do so — and perhaps it is — I shall go with you heart and hand; but I foresee a great many difficulties."

Getting up, Ben, with long strides, set out for the house, forgetful of his canoe, which remained at the water's edge.

"Ben, you have left the canoe unfastened, and right in the tide's way."

Going back, the troubled and excited giant

caught up the great "dug-out," and flung her high on the grass ground, as though she had been a bread-tray, while Sally followed in silence, almost fear, as he strode along, the clam-shells on the bank crumbling beneath his heavy tread.

This was one of many isolated cases occurring here and there in distant and diverse localities, which were the first faint pulsations, the advance wave of that great movement in favor of reform, that in after years swept over the land.

They gave spirit to the mourners at the funeral, of which Captain Rhines and Seth Warren partook — the very persons who drew John from the water; even Uncle Isaac drank; but Ben shrank from it with horror. Ben's resolution was soon known through the neighborhood, and great was the odium he incurred: the minister declared it was against reason, Scripture, and the experiences of the church; that Ben ought to have his head shaved, and a blister put on it.

"I should like to see the man who would put it on," said Joe Griffin.

The divine even preached a sermon, in which he said it was a creature of God, and that "every creature of God was good, and to be received with thanksgiving;" but Ben, who went to hear

it, was so far from being convinced, that he said rum was not a creature of God, but of the distiller; that a man couldn't get drunk on molasses, though he should eat a hogshead, nor on apples, though he should eat a cart-load. It was not very long before Ben's resolution was put to the test. Uncle Isaac and Sam, who had been out all night gunning, called in the morning to get breakfast. They were received as cordially as ever, but no spirit was offered, and no apology made. It was soon known that Ben neither drank nor offered it to his friends, and that he thought it wrong to do either.

This was throwing down the gauntlet to the whole community · all summer long the town was like a swarm of bees; at first they were all of one mind, united in opposition; none talked louder than Flour's wife, whose husband always beat her when he was drunk.

In process of time, some began to think there might be *something* in what Ben said, but that he carried his ideas to extremes, and out of all reason; and a few, *very few*, thought he was right; among whom, to the great surprise of everybody, was Aunt Molly Bradish. Even the minister went to remonstrate with her upon the danger of suddenly changing established habits, and leaving off at her

time of life; but the old lady bade him remember old Mr. Yelf, who always sat under his preaching, and, by reason of an established habit, died in a hog-pen: she also brought so many instances of a similar kind, with which her long life and strong memory supplied her, of murders, suicides, farms mortgaged, families beggared, and vessels wrecked by rum, that he was glad to beat a retreat; moreover, she declared she would, if she lived, speak to Captain Rhines about it. Thus this beautiful isle became the dwelling-place of thrift, temperance, and domestic happiness, while the neighboring main was reeking with rum.

John, Fred, and Charlie were in raptures, and persuaded Ben to bore another hole in the big maple.

Ben, now that John was gone, bought the Perseverance, with all her fishing gear, and brought her over to the island, where he painted and put her in good repair for a summer's fishing. He said he didn't want her, but couldn't bear to have her go out of the bay, John thought so much of her; and they had spent so many happy hours together in her, with Joe Griffin, Uncle Isaac, and others, on fishing expeditions, that even the name of the Perseverance was always associated in their

minds with a good time; for John Strout — whose nearest relative was a nephew who lived at a distance — was on intimate terms with all the young people, and once a year invited them all to sail and camp out.

CHAPTER XII.

THREE YOUNG FARMERS.

IT was now full time to think of husbandry. From the period the Creator anchored it amid the surf, Elm Island had ever been a most lovely spot; but it was the beauty of wild and savage nature, with features changeful as an April morn.

When the surf poured its floods of boiling silver among the ragged cliffs, black with masses of tangled weed, and the sullen roar went up to heaven, it assumed an aspect of terrific grandeur, while the sunlight, streaming through the scattered growth of oak and maple bathed in dew, backed by frowning masses of gigantic pines, and the murmur of waves on the beach, mingling with the brook's low ripple, produced at other times an impression of quiet beauty which haunted the memory for years. But no blossoms perfumed the air, or apples reddened in the morning sunbeam; no buds greeted the returning light, or yellow ears peeped from the parted husk.

Amid the foliage of those lordly elms, maples, and pendent birches, no bird built its nest. It was but seldom, even, that the notes of the robin or the woodpecker, as transient visitors, were heard, or the wild pigeon's low call as he stopped to rest his weary wing. The plough had never broken the sod, and the only crops ever grown, or growing, on this wild spot, were Charlie's patch of turnips, and the rye which Ben had sown in the previous autumn. The occasional low of cattle, the scream of sea-birds, and the growling and barking of seals, alone mingled with the everlasting dash of waters.

Ben and Sally, pressed by poverty, and struggling to retain their beautiful prize, had hitherto been denied the gratification of those strong proclivities that drew them to the soil. Bound down by the necessities of their lot to one kind of labor, it was chop, chop, or fish, fish, destroying that which God had made beautiful, and leaving in its room, blackened stumps or naked, half-charred stubs. But now the pressure was removed, the beautiful inheritance was theirs, labor and resolute enterprise had brought its own reward; they were now possessed of the means to follow their natural tastes. But cultivation in the wilderness pro-

ceeds slowly; time is required to remove the first growth, and afterwards for the stumps to decay, or become tender, that the plough may do its work. There was, as the readers of the previous volumes will recollect, but a small portion of the island, which, originally nude of trees, could now be ploughed; and this, which lay in front of the house and along the shore, must, the greater portion of it, be reserved for pasture; and then the cattle must be kept partly on browse, as a part of this must be reserved for hay; for though Ben was now able to buy hay, it was a great deal of labor, and involved some risk to transport it; thus to cut even a portion of his hay at home was a great object. This state of things must continue; nor could farming be carried on to any great extent till more land was cleared, and that already cleared be ploughed, or become pasture for stock or natural mowing. In this state of things, Ben had determined to spend the summer in clearing more land, and planting and taking care of that already cleared.

But he had bought the Perseverance just for "auld lang syne," and because he couldn't bear to see her go out of the bay. Something must now be done with her. It was by no means in accord-

ance with Ben's ideas of doing things, to let her lie idle, because there was money in the old candle-box. He also knew there was no one around, who would do well in her, but his father.

"I wish," he soliloquized, "father would take her, and let me go into the farming." He gave him a hint, but the old captain had no idea of that kind; he had got a good bunch of money, and was going to set out another orchard, make improvements, and have things ship-shape.

Ben was quite perplexed: more land ought to be cleared, the barn *must* be shingled, and if that already cleared was not taken care of, it would go back to bushes, and by autumn become a complete jungle.

"It's just like me," said Ben to himself—"act first and think afterwards. I ought not to have let my feelings run away with me, and bought that schooner; it couldn't certainly make any difference to John, now he is gone, poor boy, what becomes of her; but it would to me; so I'll do the best I can with her."

It was a rainy afternoon when Ben held this conference with himself, sitting in the barn door, during which he whittled up three shingles. At length he resolved upon his course of action. It

was one of Ben's peculiarities, — he was not made like other men, inside nor out, — that though slow in coming to a conclusion, yet when the decision was made, every detail lay clearly in his mind, and he neither changed nor hesitated. But we will let him unfold his purpose in his own way, as it has a good deal to do with certain young friends of ours, and an important bearing on their after life.

Just as Ben had finished whittling his last shingle, and shut up his knife with the air of one who has made up his mind to some definite course of action, Sally blew the horn for supper.

"Charlie," said Ben, at the table, "what boy is that, with black hair and black eyes, that I saw in the mill the other day?"

"That is Robert Williams, sir; Mr. Williams is his uncle; his father and mother are dead, and he's taken him."

"How old is he?"

"Seventeen."

"Then Fred ain't much needed in the mill — is he?"

"No, sir; he don't have hardly anything to do."

"Hum! How many groceries has he got left to sell?"

"Hardly any, sir: the molasses and sugar are all gone; he's only got a little coffee, that would have been gone long ago, only Joe Griffin got tired of retailing, and put his'n into Fred's hands."

"Then Mr. Williams has taken another boy, and Fred hasn't much of anything to do. Hum! Who was that stout, light-complexioned man, that Ricker had such hard work to pull up, and who beat Joe jumping? I saw Uncle Isaac talking with him a good deal."

"O, sir, that's Uncle Isaac's hired man: they say he's a master smart man with a scythe, and as tough as a 'biled owl.' Uncle Isaac told me he had always done other people's work, and then half killed himself to do his own; that he wasn't going to slave himself so any longer, but had hired a first-rate man, and was going to live easier this summer, and work only when he had a mind to."

"Indeed! that means from morning to night, and some time in the night."

The next morning early, Ben started in his canoe for the main land. When he returned at dusk, he could scarcely walk up from the shore.

"What is the matter, Ben?" asked his wife.

"Nothing, only a little stiff, sitting so long in the canoe. I rather think my foot's asleep."

"I know better than that: you've been wrestling or jumping."

"No, I've been riding; and I haven't been on a horse's back before since I was married."

"Where have you been?"

"To Uncle Isaac's, Joe Griffin's, Uncle Sam's, Robert Yelf's, Godsoe's, and a lot more places, to pick up a crew for the schooner."

"Have you got one?"

"Yes, a rousing one — Uncle Isaac, Joe Griffin, Flour, Uncle Sam, and a lot more."

"Who's going skipper?"

"I am."

"Don't that break your promise?"

"No; that ain't going to sea; it's only going a fishing — be at home in two months."

"But what is to become of the land?"

"Charlie will take care of that."

"That is a good deal to put on a boy's shoulders."

"No, it ain't, mother. O, I can do it!" exclaimed Charlie, in ecstasy of delight. I will plant and hoe, and take the best care that ever was of you, mother."

"I've not the least doubt of that, Charlie."

"But you are not to do it alone; you are to

have help," said Ben; but noticing the shade of disappointment that crossed Charlie's handsome face,—for he was excited with the idea that he was to have an opportunity to show what he could do in his father's absence,—he said, "You would like to have John and Fred Williams to work with you, to plant, clear, and do what you like, all summer, and you be head boy — wouldn't you?"

"O, wouldn't I!" cried he, jumping to his feet: "won't we raise crops, and have things; won't we make business ache, and tear things up by the roots?"

"Why, Charlie," said Ben, "how big you feel! I should think you had been taking lessons of Joe Bradish or Joel Ricker."

Charlie blushed. "At any rate, there's one thing I'll do; but that's *telling*;" and he went out of the house capering, and singing, "We three young farmers;" and up he went to the old maple, and clambered clear to the top, to sit down on the platform, digest the good news, and lay plans for the future.

He did not remain long before exclaiming, "It's no use to lay any plans till they come." He went back to the house.

The next morning Uncle Isaac and six more

came on: they took the *Perseverance*, and went to Portland for salt and other fittings.

Ben had sown only part of the great burn of the previous autumn — which came so near burning the cargo of the *Ark*, the house, and even Sally and the baby — with winter rye; a large part of it lay cleared of logs and brands, which were piled in great heaps round the stumps and stubs, and was covered with a deep bed of ashes. The boys could not come for a week, and while Ben and his crew were gone, Charlie went to planting corn on this burn, making a hole in the ashes and mould with a sharp stick, dropping in the corn, which he carried in his pocket, and then covering it with his foot.

The wind was ahead, and it was thick of fog for some days after their return from Portland, so they could not start.

“Ben,” said Uncle Isaac, “here is a whole raft of us great fellows doing nothing: put a compass in the canoe, and let Joe and Charlie go over to the main, and get hatchets and hammers, and we’ll put every shingle on your barn, if it holds foggy, and while they are gone we’ll get out the weather and saddle boards.”

Nothing could have suited Charlie better, for he

was dying to see John, since, as was often the case, he had an idea.

The moment he got into Captain Rhines's sitting-room, having first sworn all hands to secrecy, he said, "You know father's going fishing, and I, John, and Fred are going to take care of the farm. There is the nicest piece of ground back of the house, right under the south side of the ledge and the woods, just as warm as toast: now, father and mother have no idea that I shall plant anything but corn and potatoes on the burn, and a few peas; but after he's gone, I mean to do lots of things he has never dreamed of. I mean to have a real nice garden, as nice as anybody has, with beets, parsnips, onions, peas, beans, cucumbers, squashes, watermelons, currant-bushes, and cabbages: I want you to give me some seeds."

"You shall have the seeds, Charlie," said Captain Rhines; "but how can you have these things on newly-ploughed ground; you need old fine soil to sow seeds in; 'twill be all lump and turf."

"No, sir; the ground there ain't like the ground here. Where I'm going to have the garden, it is all covered with red oak, beech, and birch leaves, that blow from the woods, and lie there all summer, and rot, a foot thick; and when you scrape

them off, you can run your hands right into the soil, it's so mellow, and just as black and rich as can be. Then we've got a great big plough that Uncle Isaac made, and we're going to have your oxen and Uncle Isaac's, and his hired man to hold it, and plough it real deep, turn all the leaves under, and bring up the mellow earth. Joe has made me some iron rake teeth, and I'm going to make a head for them this evening, and then I shall have something to rake my beds with."

"I shouldn't think," said Captain Rhines,—who loved Charlie, and loved dearly to draw him out, and see what ideas he had of things,—“it would pay to carry four oxen on to the island, and bring them off again, just to plough a garden spot, to plant and sow a little sauce.”

“O, sir, I'm going to plough more than that; I'm going to break up two acres, and plant with corn and potatoes. Uncle Isaac says, in that cool, moist ground, potatoes will do better than they will on a hot burn. We've got an awful sight of manure, all we've made since we've been on the island.”

“But if you plough up so much of your grass ground,—and you haven't much,—you will come short of hay for the winter, and pasture for summer.”

“Uncle Isaac says I needn’t be one mite afraid to plough; for if I put in a lot of manure, the ground being rich before, I shall raise so much corn and corn fodder, it will be worth three times the hay that would grow there for the cattle; and that, as for pasturing, as we are going to falling trees, there will be browse enough for the cattle all summer.”

“I shouldn’t think you would need dressing on new land; it is a great deal of work to haul out manure.”

“But he told me to be sure and use every mite of it, and said that when he took up his farm, he used to haul it and tip it over the bank into the water, to get rid of it round the barn, but he soon began to need it, and that no longer than his farm had been cleared, it was beginning to run out; he said it was a great deal easier to keep land in heart than it was to put it in heart after it was sapped, and that on the main land people could *skin* a piece of land, and then leave it and clear up another; but on the island we were limited, and so it stood us in hand to *keep* our land good while it was good.”

“If you have got Uncle Isaac for adviser, I guess you will do very well.”

"That ain't all, sir."

"What more is there? I should think that, with two acres of broken-up ground to plant and hoe, a burn to plant—"

"No, sir; I've got that planted."

"Well, there's another piece to burn over and plant, or sow, and trees to fall. I should think that was about enough for three boys to do, for I suppose there must be some time to play."

"Yes, sir, sometimes, after supper; but wouldn't you think, sir, that three boys, who could wrestle as we three did, and fling all the boys in town, might do some work, if we put into it with all our might?"

"Bravo, Charlie! I should think you might."

"But, as I was saying, sir, mother loves flowers dearly; so does father; so do I. In my country the poorest men will have a flower in their bosoms Sunday morning. Mother dearly loves anything that reminds her of home; she loves the line-backed cow because she came from home. I've heard her tell, many a time, about a beautiful great white rose-bush, that reached up to the chamber-window, and looked so handsome in June. Now, if it is so large, couldn't John get a part of it for me from Mrs. Hadlock's, and when he and Fred come on, bring it to me?"

"Yes, Charlie," said John, "I will."

"There's another thing she wants dreadfully."

"What's that?" asked Mrs. Rhines.

"A hop-vine."

"I'll give you one; you can plant it at the front door, and it will run up over it, and on the bark roof, and look beautifully. I'll give you some holly-hock, peony, pink and lily roots, and a lilac bush."

"I," said Mary, "will give you a snow-ball, and a cabbage-rose, and honeysuckle."

"O, I thank you all very much."

"I tell you," said John, "old Mrs. Yelf has got lots of flowers, and we can get some of her."

"Yes," said Mary, "she's got Honesty; that's real pretty."

"You see," said Charlie, "this must be kept dark, because we want to surprise mother."

"That's impossible," said Mrs. Rhines, "for she will see you."

"We can do it in the night; there's a good moon."

"You can't sow seeds in the night," said Captain Rhines.

"No, sir; but we can set out the roots, and we can plant the cucumbers, squashes, and water-melons, when she is busy weaving. She won't

know but they are potatoes till they come up. won't she be glad then? Don't you think, sir, all the time we've lived on the island,—although it is such good land and will grow anything,—we've never had a green pea, cabbage, new potato, ear of corn, nor any kind of thing, except cranberries, and those flat turnips I raised; and mother does love such things so well! and perhaps we may have an orchard."

"Pray, Charlie," said Captain Rhines, "do you sleep of nights?"

"O, yes, sir," innocently replied Charlie; "the moment I am in bed I am fast asleep."

"I should not think you could, you are so full of projects, and so stirred up."

"I'm not so all the time; but it always stirs me up, to the ends of my toes, to think about doing anything for mother or father."

"It was a good thing for Ben and Sally when you drifted ashore at Elm Island."

"It was a good thing for me, sir; a poor, friendless boy, in bad company, and who didn't know how to get out of it."

"You're a noble boy, Charlie," said the captain, drawing towards him, and unable to disguise his admiration.

"You don't know how frightened I felt the day of the wrestle; I trembled like a leaf when father said he would take hold of Ricker."

"Why so?"

"Because, sir, I saw he didn't like his talk and bragging way, and I didn't know but he might get provoked, and take him up, and smash him down, as he did the pirates: it brought that awful day all up again."

"Ben is much like Tige," said the captain — "of excellent disposition, but awful when he rises. But here comes Joe with the hammers, and we must be right off, for the men are all waiting. John, go over and get Sam Hadlock, and we'll all go to the island and help Ben put on his shingles; he'll feel better to see it done before he goes away; then he'll know his hay and grain are safe."

Charlie and Joe set off, followed by Captain Rhines and the others. So large an accession of force enabled them to shingle the barn, and give the roof a coat of fish-oil, tar, red ochre, and brimstone, before the fog mull was over.

Uncle Isaac said a brimstone *top* was as good for a barn as a brimstone *bottom* for a vessel. He called Charlie aside, and said to him, "When you

burn your piece, and come to junk and pile, you had better nigger off the logs."

"What is that, sir?"

"You see it's a heavy job for boys to chop off logs three or four feet through, but you can nigger them off. Take a large, dry stick, — hard wood is best, — lay it across the log you want to work on, and build a fire of knots on top, right against the stick; when it has burned deep enough, knock the coals off with an axe, and set it going again. You can have twenty or thirty going at once; one of you can tend them, and beat the coals off, while the others chop; and take turns. You can do many more, and much easier, than by chopping."

With this parting advice from Uncle Isaac, the Perseverance spread her sails, and in a few hours the fleet pink-stern melted away from the eyes of Charlie, as he sat watching her from the summit of the tall pine, from whence he and Ben had watched the receding form of the Ark.

"I hope," said Charlie, "she will be as lucky. I suppose we shall know, when Fred and John come, what our ventures amounted to."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BOYS SETTLE WITH FRED WILLIAMS.

"CHARLIE," said his mother, as he entered the house, "there's one thing just come to my mind, that it seems very strange none of us should have thought of."

"What is it, mother?"

"Why, don't you know, when we had the tea-party on board the Congress, Ben invited Aunt Molly Bradish to come and make us a visit, and Uncle Isaac promised to bring her over in his Indian canoe? And now they are both gone, the time has come, and nobody said or thought anything about it. I don't wonder that we didn't; what with poor John's death, and the raising, and Ben's going away, and all, I'm sure I've had my hands full, and head too; but I should have thought Uncle Isaac would; he'll feel real worked when they get outside, and he thinks of it; so will Ben, and so do I, for Uncle Isaac calculates his promise is as sure as the flood tide."

"Do you think she will care much?"

"Yes, she will care a good deal, for she lotted on coming. She told me, the day I went over to get the wool, that she laid out to come, and showed me the cloth for a dress she had sent to Portland for, and calculated to bring on with her, and have me cut and make. I have cut and made all her dresses for years. O, I'm so sorry!"

"Mother, why don't she come now? It will be real nice to have her here. Can't she tell stories?"

"*Stories!* I guess she can. She lived through all the Indian wars, and has killed Indians."

"Soul and body! We three boys will take the big canoe, and go and get her."

"No, you can't, for she won't come with you, nor in anything but an Indian canoe."

"Can't anybody else but Uncle Isaac paddle one?"

"I don't know but some of the old folks might, but she wouldn't come with anybody but Uncle Isaac. Well, you'll have to carry me over to the main land, and I'll tell her how sorry I am, how it happened, and get her to put it off till Ben and Uncle Isaac come."

"Mother, when Fred and John come, why couldn't I bring my bed down into the front

room, and Fred sleep in the spare bed, and John and I in mine?"

"I'm sure I shan't put Fred in my best bed, on my ticks, that I've just wove. I know very well what work boys make, pulling each other out of bed, and throwing the pillows at each other; and especially when they daub themselves with bear's grease."

"But I shouldn't have thrown Henry Griffin if it hadn't been for bear's grease: John and Fred both said so."

Charlie was planning to sleep below, as it would be easier to get out of the house in the night without detection. Watching the opposite shore with the glass, he saw them driving the cattle into the gundalow."

"Here they come, mother; won't it be a rousing team? Our oxen are seven feet, and so are theirs. Uncle Isaac's are more; six seven-foot oxen; O, my!"

Charlie met them when they were half way over. John, taking him astern, lifted up a sail, and showed him half a cart-load of roots."

"I tell you Fred and I have travelled some to get all them, you'd better believe."

They put them all in the woods, under some

hemlocks, and covered them with wet moss. Charlie's garden spot was found to justify all the praises he had bestowed upon it. The soil, close up to the perpendicular ledge, was deep and free from stones. The great plough, going clean to the beam, passed through the layers of decayed leaves and trunks of trees, reduced by the action of time to a fine black or red mould (except the pine knots, which came in great numbers to the surface), and reaching the soil below, buried all the surface leaves beneath a fine rich mould. As they receded from the cliff, the land became a clay loam, filled more or less with the decayed trunks of trees.

"You've got strength enough; plough deep, Thorndike," said the captain, "to make easy hoeing for the boys," and went into the house to have a chat with Sally.

"How do you like having your husband, a sailor?"

"I don't like it at all, Captain Rhines," said Sally. "Ben says going fishing ain't going to sea; but I can't see the difference."

"You ought to have put that into the contract when you promised to have him. Ben has got to the windward of you there."

"Captain Rhines, I want to ask you one question, before it slips my mind. Can you go in an Indian canoe?"

"Go in a *birch*? Yes, child, as well as I can in my own canoe."

"I thought nobody could go in them but Indians."

"Nonsense! it's all in practice. When I was a boy I had mostly Indian playfellows; lived half the time in their canoes, with the squaws and young Indians. Father, and most of the first settlers, had birches, they were so light and handy: there were no bridges, or ferries, and they could take their canoes on their backs, and when they came to a creek or stream, put it in and cross: they kept them hid in places where they often went."

"Uncle Isaac promised to bring Aunt Molly Bradish on here in an Indian canoe, because she wouldn't come in anything, or with anybody else; he went away and forgot it; she's got all ready to come, and you know old folks can't bear to be put off."

"You're a good, thoughtful girl, Sally; when I'm old, I'll come and live with you."

"I should like to have her, first rate, now Ben is gone; couldn't you take Uncle Isaac's birch, and bring her on?"

"Indeed I could; shouldn't like anything better when I get my planting in."

"But do you suppose she would trust herself with you?"

"Trust herself with me! why, she was brought up at our house: we've paddled a birch together, miles and miles; she could beat me then at the paddle, for she was a great deal older than I was, and a dreadful strong, resolute creature, and about the roughest one—till she became religious—you ever saw. John Bragdon said something to her she didn't like, and she flung him into the river."

"I should be very much obliged to you, for Charlie's in the greatest nip to have her come on here."

The boys were full of ambition, not only to earn their wages, but, like all good-conditioned boys, to outdo each other. They were by no means ignorant that they had a reputation to sustain; that they were considered three of the smartest, if not the three smartest boys in town; and everybody would be noticing and criticising their proceedings. They knew that many people thought it was not just the thing for Ben to go off and leave these boys to their own head. Some said they would fall trees on each other, and all want to be captains, and plague Sally's life out; others,

that they wouldn't have judgment to plant, and take care of a crop, and would burn themselves and the whole island up.

The boys heard all this from their friend and well-wisher, Henry Griffin, who had no ill will to Charlie for getting the better of him, and told him all that was said. The boys were, therefore, put on their mettle, in order to disappoint these prophets. Even Captain Rhines shook his head when Ben broached the matter to him.

"Father," said Ben, "I have always noticed that the truckmen, when they have a heavy load, and are afraid they shan't haul it, roll the cask forward to bring the weight on the shaft-horse's back. I think it's best to put weight on the boys' backs, if you want them to be good for anything."

"You are right there, Ben," said Uncle Isaac; "for that was the way your father was brought up, and his father before him."

The boys chose to have breakfast at six, dinner at twelve, and supper at five. By this arrangement they had a long forenoon; and the hours after supper were the best part of the day for work, being refreshed by food, and their muscles braced by the cool air of evening, and also for play, for Ben, who knew well the temper of the

boys, had charged Sally to see that they allowed themselves proper time for recreation. After they had ploughed and harrowed the ground, the boys assisted Thorndike and Captain Rhines in getting the oxen over to the main land. It was about supper time when they got back to the island.

"This is the best time we shall have to settle with Fred for our ventures," said Charlie, "for when we get fairly at work, we must drive."

"I'm ready to show the papers and pay over the money," said Fred.

"Where shall we go?" asked Charlie, when supper was over.

"In the barn," replied Fred.

"Under the yellow birch, at the brook," said John.

"Upon the platform in the top of the old maple," said Charlie.

"But we shall want to do some writing. I shall want something from you, to show that I have duly paid over the money, and am free from all obligations."

"We can look over the accounts and count the money up there, and do the writing in the house, at father's desk: we can sit there and talk, and look off."

It was a beautiful calm night, not a breath of wind to disarrange the papers that Fred spread out, and which Charlie and John perused with the gravity of Indian sagamores in council.

Fred counted out to Charlie \$444.50, to John \$337.50, and John then paid Fred his commission.

"We didn't think of this when we slept up here last year," said Charlie. "From whom did you have the highest commission, Fred?"

"From you."

"How much in the whole?"

"On the first lot, \$301.50. Joe Griffin left enough in my hands afterwards to bring it up to \$350.50."

"That's making money pretty quick."

"Yes; but I shouldn't have had enough to buy me a pair of shoes to wear to meeting, had it not been for you, John."

"We did but a small part of it," replied John.

"But you were the *means* of it all."

"I think people ought to help each other," said Charlie: "we have got more for our ventures than if we had sold them to the traders, and had no trouble about it; so it has been a mutual thing. But what is to be done with the scales, measures, and tunnels?"

"I'll buy them," said Fred. "I like to trade; and if father's willing, I believe, after I get through here, I shall get some things and trade a little on my own account. Father don't need me in the mill now Robert has come."

"I would, Fred," said Charlie. "I think you are just cut out for a trader; everybody likes you: you've been in the mill so long that you've had a chance to get acquainted with people, and do them a great many good turns."

"All the girls like you first rate," said John, "because you are so polite to put their grists on their horses for them, and help them on; and that goes a good ways: you'll sell lots of calico, pins, needles, side-combs, silk, and twist."

"I've got acquainted with a great many more since I have been selling the molasses, sugar, and coffee, and with fishermen, and people from other towns, and many of them have asked me why I didn't set up; said they would trade with me; let me have fish, and wait for the pay till I could cure and sell them, and take part pay in goods. I should have to begin in a very small way, for all I've got is this \$350: father says he won't take a cent of it, though I offered it to him; he says I've done enough in the mill to earn my board and

clothes, and more too, and that my trading has almost doubled the custom of the mill."

"As for me," said Charlie, "I am going to have a first-rate set of tools, and then save every cent I can get to buy a piece of land. O, if I could only own a piece of land!"

"That's just what I mean to do with mine," said John.

"I don't see what you want of land, John," said Fred; "your father's got land enough."

"I hope you don't think I want to live on father. I ain't one of that kind. I mean to have a piece of land, a horse, and cattle, that I've earned myself, and a handsome wife, and be able to throw any man in town."

"I guess you've spelt now," said Fred; "you'd better be put to bed."

"Boys," said Charlie, "I want you to make the most of to-night's leisure; it's the last we shall get very soon, I can tell you."

"What a smart boss we've got!" said Fred; "go ahead; we'll keep your back warm: if you can tucker us, you'll have to travel; we're corn-fed boys, and well put together."

"That's the truth," said Charlie: "now, on our way home, let's look at the piece we are going to burn."

The land referred to had been, for the most part, covered with a heavy growth of rock maple, beech, and some elms, with a few clumps of large pines, save on one side, where the ground was swampy, and yellow birch, gray maple, ash, and hemlock predominated.

Ben had culled out the large pines and some of the hemlock for his barn, and sold some for spars to pay for his help and get nails before he received any returns from the Ark, and cut down all the rest for a burn.

It would have been in accordance with the common custom to have let it lie and dry till fall, or even till the next year; but Ben was anxious to get the land cleared for pasture. The growth was mostly hard wood, which burns better green than pine or hemlock. The spring was remarkably dry, and he determined to burn it.

"I don't believe fire will run much here," said John, as they came to the swamp, "for there is a puddle of water. I tell you what, we will set it in the night."

"Well, let's," said Fred.

"So we will," said Charlie; "and we'll get a whole lot of lobsters, clams, and potatoes, and have a real cook; make coffee, roast a fish with a

piece of pork in his belly; yes, and shoot a bird and roast him. O, it will be such fun!"

"I see you, old chap," shouted Fred.

"See what?"

"Something in that hollow log. I guess it's a coon."

An enormous birch had been cut, which was hollow to the lower limbs, and had broken off, in falling, by striking upon a sharp ledge.

"I can't see anything," said John, peering into the log.

"Well, he's in there. I know he is."

"I guess he is," said Charlie; "see here," — picking up part of a flounder, and some wrinkles, — "see what he's brought here: run a stick in at the other end, John, and drive him out, and we'll stand by to knock him on the head."

"O, no, don't; let's take him alive, and keep him till we set the fire, and then we'll roast and eat him in the night."

This proposition met with universal favor; how to effect it, was the question, for a coon is by no means a novice in biting.

There are not many things that boys, who have been thrown on their own resources as much as these had been, will not compass when their

hearts are set on it. One scratched his head, another scratched his head, and all scratched their heads.

"I know how we must do," cried John; "we must put something at the end of the log, and drive him into it."

"But what shall we put?" asked Charlie.

"Well, put on my breeches."

"Your breeches won't begin to cover the end of the log."

"Well, stop part of it up."

They stopped the upper part of the log with branches of trees and brush. John divested himself of his breeches, the legs of which being tied up, they were fastened with withes to the log, John, in the excitement of the moment, not hesitating to make holes in the waistband with his knife. Charlie and Fred held the breeches to the log, while John crawled into the other end with a long stick. He soon found his progress barred by rotten wood; but it was so soft that he dug it away with his hands.

"I hear him," he cried; "if I don't come to any sound wood, I'll get to him."

He ran the stick, which he had pointed with his knife, into the rotten wood, and kept punching.

"O, ain't I *got* you, *coonie*?" screamed Fred. "I've got him right in the leg of the breeches."

"Hold on to him till I get there: won't we have a feast?"

John scrambled out of the hole: they took the breeches from the log, and tied up the orifice. It was no trifling labor to carry the creature over the trunks of the trees, and through the brush, and keep him from getting out of this novel bag, or from biting them. But they arrived home at last with their prize, and put him in a safe place. He soon became willing to eat, and quite tame, so much so, that Charlie, who was extravagantly fond of pets of all kinds, and tender-hearted withal, wanted to spare his life; but the others were inexorable. Sally did not favor it.

"He'll suck your eggs," said John; "coons are the greatest thieves that ever was: there's no principle in 'em."

"They are real bloodthirsty," said Fred; "they will kill your chickens and young ducks; they will take a hen right off the roost, and eat all the corn in the garden."

This last accusation settled the matter, and Charlie gave up the coon to the tender mercies of his captors.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ISLAND GARDEN.

NOTWITHSTANDING their evening's adventure, and the late hour at which they retired, they were up with the sun. The oxen must eat till after breakfast, and, as they could not do anything on the large piece without them, to haul the dressing, the boys went to work upon the garden, which they had already dressed with manure, and a whole lot of ashes from a heap on the burn, where a pile of logs had been burnt. Charlie did this by Uncle Isaac's advice, who told him, before he went away, that so many red-oak leaves had rotted for ages on the garden spot, that the ground would probably be sour, and he had better warm it up well with manure and ashes. Charlie, knowing he was to take charge, had improved every opportunity to question Uncle Isaac, and in the course of the summer the other boys were often astonished at the knowledge and decision Charlie manifested, not dreaming from whence the greater portion was derived. Charlie

made a great parade of showing his mother the seeds, — the planting of which, he could not conceal from her, — in order to lull her suspicions more effectually to rest in other respects. He showed her the beets, onions, and parsnips, and made her come out and see how nice the beds looked after they were raked off, and the alleys made. He also showed her some early peas, potatoes, and early corn, Captain Rhines had given him. But the rogue said never a word about the cucumbers, watermelons, and squashes he had, hid away in his drawer, in the house under the old maple, or the bushes and roots beneath the hemlock.

“She would jump out of her skin,” said Charlie, “if she knew what is in the woods.”

Too eager to afford themselves any time to play, these ambitious boys were at work through the day in the field, planting corn and potatoes before breakfast in the garden, while the cattle were eating at noon and after supper.

To the remonstrances of Sally, who wished them to take some time after supper to play, Charlie’s uniform reply was, “After planting, mother: we must get done planting before Capt. Rhines and Thorndike.”

“But you musn’t work the other boys so hard. Ben don’t want you to.”

"They are in for it, as much as me, mother."

"It's no use for you to try to beat them: they work on old, smooth ground, while you have got that piece to burn and fence in, and junk and pile the logs."

"I don't care; we are good for it, mother. I've thought of a way: it ain't so much work to plant on a burn; there's no manure to haul, no ploughing and harrowing. I'm ahead of them now, and I'll work all night but what I'll beat 'em; it's a good moon."

"How do you know you're ahead of them?"

"Can't I see with the glass from the top of the great pine where the eagle's nest is?"

While Sally was getting supper and milking, they planted the cucumbers, squashes, watermelons, and sowed some cabbage seed. Lest Sally should notice the different form of the cucumber and squash hills, they made the corn and potato hills just like them.

"Why, Charlie," said Sally, who, greatly interested, was a close observer, "I never saw anybody take so much pains with corn and potato hills; they look just like squash hills, — I'm sure I wish they were, — and it seems as if we might have had a few cranberry beans."

"You know, mother, what a particular old betty

I am; and when father and the rest come home, there will be a great many to criticise, and Captain Rhines will be on here."

"You have done it beautifully, Charlie; you don't know how delighted I am with it. You must know, when Sam was young and we were poor, after my father died, mother and I used to hoe corn and potatoes in the field, and make the garden; and I learned to love the land and the flowers, and we always would manage to have a few flowers and roses. O, I adore roses."

The boys, having planted the garden, had chosen a clear moonlight night on which to set out the roots and flowers.

They wanted to set out the hop-vine, which was a most important thing in domestic economy in the olden time, on one side of the front door, and the honeysuckle on the other.

But they would be about sure to wake Sally, digging around the house in the night. Ben had put some sea-weed near the sills to prevent the cellar from freezing, and part of it still remained there. Charlie volunteered to help Sally milk: on their way from the yard, he proposed that they should go and look at the corn he had planted on the burn, and which was just coming up. After

looking at the corn, they sat down on a log, and talked about improvements they were going to make, and built castles in the air till after dark. In the mean time Fred and John had cleared away the sea-weed, dug up and manured the ground, planted the hop and honeysuckle, and covered them with the sea-weed, so that everything bore the same appearance as before.

There was but one pair of chamber stairs; those went up from the kitchen, where Sally slept. How the boys were to get down without waking her, was the question; indeed, she was quite likely to be awake with the child. It was for this reason that Charlie wanted to sleep in the front room, where egress would have been easy by the front door; foiled in this, he had made a light ladder. The chamber was very large, the house being a story and a half, and in it were some birch, clear pine and ash boards, which Ben had stored for special purposes, as he had then no barn; under these Charlie hid the ladder. At midnight, when all was still, they went down from the window by the bright moonlight, set out the flower roots, bushes, and some young trees in the places they had marked in the daytime, removed the sea-weed from the hop and honeysuckle, and tied them up

to the logs, then ascended the ladder, pulling it up after them, and went to bed. They did not wake in the morning till Sally called them to breakfast.

“Why, how you look, boys! all worn out. I told you you were working too hard; you must work less hours; you haven’t got your strength yet; you’ll hurt yourselves.”

“After planting,” said Charlie.

All the forenoon, while covering corn, the boys amused themselves, guessing and speculating as to the length of time that would probably elapse before Sally would discover the result of their night’s work. They could hardly contain themselves at dinner time, and were as full of tickle as they could live.

“What is the matter, boys?” asked Sally, who saw that something unusual was going on. At this Charlie burst into a roar of laughter, in which the others joined. Sally glanced at her dress, and then got up and went to the glass, to see if there was any smut on her face or dress.

This was altogether too much for Charlie, who dropped his knife and fork, and laughed till he cried.

“If it is so good,” said Sally, a little nettled at being made a laughing-stock, “I should think you

might let it out, that somebody else could enjoy it."

"O, no; it's too good to let out," said Charlie.

"Ho, ho, ho! he, he, he! teehee!" squealed Fred.

"It will come out in time," said John.

"Or come up," said Fred.

"Hold your tongue, Fred; you'll let it all out."

"I should have thought," said John, when they were at a safe distance from the house, "she would have found it out before this."

"I had hard work," said Charlie, "to hold in this morning at breakfast, when she was telling how used up we looked."

"The wood-pile," said John, "is between the garden and the house, and takes the sight off. I don't believe she'll find it out to-day, unless she goes to the hovel for eggs, or to feed the pig."

As for Sally, the moment the boys were gone, she began to examine herself more closely, and came to the conclusion that it was not anything about her which excited their mirth, and finally hunted the house over.

"I don't believe it's anything more than their nonsense," said she, and sat down to weave in the front room, while Ben was playing in the sun at the door.

It was not long before the child came running in to his mother, and, clutching her dress, began trying to pull her towards the door, gesticulating with all his might. Thinking it was merely a passing vessel, she continued to weave: the child would not be put off, and she, at length, permitted him to drag her to the door, when the secret was out."

"A hop-vine, as sure as I'm alive; just what I've always wanted as long as I've lived here (there's no keeping house without a hop-vine), and a honeysuckle, too; now I know what tickled the boys so. Charlie's at the bottom of this, I know. What good boys they are!"

Her curiosity now thoroughly excited, she proceeded to explore, and, going to the garden, stood rooted to the spot with amazement. Extending nearly the whole length of the garden, along the ledge, were two rows of currant bushes; at one end a cherry tree, and at the other a plum and pear tree; also some roots of sage, hoarhound, caraway, and horseradish.

There was also a space reserved for flowers, in which were lilac, snow-ball, white and cabbage rose bushes, hollyhocks, honesty, pinks, lilies, India feather, peony, marigolds, heart's-ease, bachelor's buttons, and cives.

The rest was devoted, as Sally supposed, to beets, onions, parsnips, corn, peas, and potatoes; but the reticent soil contained squashes, beans, cucumbers, and watermelons.

"Well-a-day!" she cried, rubbing her eyes, "I ought to be better than I am. What would Ben say to this? They must have ransacked the town to get all these. That is our dear old white rose-bush; I know it is. O, how natural that looks! The cherry, plum, and pear trees must have come from Captain Rhines."

Taking little Ben, she set out for the field.

"Here comes mother," said Charlie; "she's found out."

She caught Charlie round the neck and kissed him, and then the others.

"You good boys, how did you know just what I had been wanting so long?"

"It's all Charlie's work," said John; "he knew."

"No, it wasn't my work; I couldn't have done a thing alone; I only *thought* about it; they got every one of the things, and brought them on here."

"I want you to tell me just one thing; is that our old white rose-bush?"

"Yes," replied John; "I asked your mother to

let you have a part of it; and she took off a little sucker, and sent all the rest to you."

"Did Captain Rhines know about it?"

"Yes; we brought them on when he came."

"Where have they been all this time?"

"In the woods; and we set them out by moonlight last night."

"I'm afraid I shan't be able to do any work this summer for looking at the garden; I shan't be able to give you supper to-night till six o'clock, I've spent so much time looking at things."

"We don't want it, mother; for we are going to finish this piece to-night; then we are going early to bed, to get our sleep up, and begin on the burn to-morrow."

Sally now hastened home, on "hospitable thoughts intent."

When the boys came in to supper, they were surprised, in their turn, to find on the table a huge chicken pie, cup custards, hot biscuits, cranberry tarts, and a great platter of molasses candy. They had a real happy time, eating and chatting, and then went out to the garden, and told Sally the history of every bush, tree, and flower root, and where they got it.

"But how did you set them out straight in the night?"

"It was good moonlight," said Charlie, "and we marked the places in the daytime, and stuck down sticks."

"How glad your father will be when he comes home, Charlie, he does love such things so! He told me that the very moment he could get land enough cleared to raise hay, and have pasture so as to keep stock, he meant to clear a piece for an orchard, and that, if he lived and had his health, he'd make cider on Elm Island yet, and have all kinds of fruits and flowers."

"Mother, Captain Rhines said that Mr. Welch told him salt was just the thing for cherry and plum trees, and that he couldn't do a better thing than put sea-weed round their roots; and I'm sure we've got enough of that. I wish father hadn't bought the schooner, and then he wouldn't have thought he must go away to pay for her."

"He couldn't bear to see her sold, and thought that, living on this island, there were a great many times, when, if we were sick, no boat could leave to cross to the main land for help; but with the schooner we could go at any time; and that we ought not to live here, among the surf, with nothing better than a dug-out; that he would make her earn something this summer, and let

her lie by in the winter, when we should need her most; that he could make her pay for the wear and tear, by fishing a little after haying and harvesting, or by letting somebody take her on shares."

CHAPTER XV.

FRED DIDN'T THINK.

ALL the scraps of time, the next day, were occupied in getting lobsters and clams, catching a rock cod, and putting them in water where they would be in a good state of preservation for their magnificent feast and bonfire, which gained added glories from anticipation, as they talked it over.

At the hour appointed it was entirely calm, and they resolved to set the burn on fire in many different places.

"I wish there wasn't any moon," said John. "A moon is very well, if you want to make a garden, but it ain't much help to a bonfire."

Stationing themselves at proper intervals, on three sides, they prepared to begin. Just as Fred was about to apply his torch for the third time, he saw a coon run through the brush, having been roused by the light of the blazing brand he was swinging around his head. Dropping the

brand, he pursued him by the moonlight, too eager to regard the brush, which, set on fire by the brand he had dropped, flamed up in his rear.

The creature, after leading him a long chase, took refuge beneath a rock: ignorant of the fact that the fire was hemming him in, he began to dig with his hands and a stick, in order to get at him. In the mean time a light breeze had sprung up; the fire was rapidly advancing, and had surrounded him. Roused at length, he found, to his horror, that all retreat was cut off.

"Fred," shouted John, "see how the fire goes through that big pine."

"Fred," shouted Charlie, "see how the fire climbs that hollow stub."

No reply. They supposed the roar of the fire drowned their voices; but when, reaching his station, they could not find him, they soon became alarmed. They went round the burn, calling and shouting all the way; but receiving no answer, apprehension soon grew to agony.

"O, Charlie, I'm afraid he's burnt up. What did possess me to want to set this fire in the night?"

In their distress they ran to the house. Sally was on the spot in a moment, and in turn accused

herself of carelessness for permitting them to set the fire in the night. Together they made the circuit of the flames, calling his name till they were hoarse.

"He is dead; the poor boy is burnt up," said Sally. "O, dear! what awful, awful news for his poor mother, and he growing up such a bright, promising boy! She will curse me, long as she lives, and ought to, for they were but boys, and I had charge of them. What would Ben say!" and covering her face with her hands, she sobbed aloud.

"If we could do anything!" said John; "but to have any one burn up, and not be able to help them, it is terrible."

Let us follow the fortunes of the object of these well-grounded apprehensions.

Fred, though careless and reckless, was a boy of capital stuff, of sharp wit, and fruitful in resources. His first impulse was to rush to the line of fire, in hopes to find some gap, through which he might escape; but a few trials convinced him the attempt was hopeless. At every point he was repelled, while the roar of the flames drowned his frantic cries for aid, which no mortal power could have extended.

In this desperate extremity he bethought himself of the hollow birch in the wet spot, where they had captured the coon. Urged by fear of instant death, he flew to the spot, and tearing up the tufts of bulrushes with the mud sticking to the roots, stopped that end of the log which lay in the direction from which the fire was advancing before the wind, and plastering the whole with soft mud, brought water in his cap and poured over it.

The limbs that stuck up on the trees had been lopped to make them lie more closely for the burn; these he dragged away.

He now put some mud inside to stop the cracks, should his barricade shrink, and proceeded to stop the other end, leaving just room to get in; then rolling himself in mud and water, he crawled, feet foremost, into his retreat, as the fire came near. It seemed almost certain that he would be burned to a cinder: only one or two things seeming to offer a chance for life. The place was a sunken spot; there was little dead wood, and the growth consisted of swamp elm, black ash, and birch, wood, that when green is kindled with difficulty, and had been the last timber cut, and was, therefore, quite green, though all around it was dry as tinder. The old birch itself, though hollow, was not dead, but

had eight inches of green wood on the outside, and was quite full of sap.

Having been brought up in a new country, and no novice in such matters, Fred based the slender hope he cherished on those considerations, still fearing that the terrible heat arising from the amount of inflammable material all around might dry the birch and other trees, till they would burn freely. Burning moss and pieces of bark borne before the wind began now to fall and kindle just before his retreat.

Gray squirrels, which had multiplied greatly since their introduction on the island, now began to scamper before the fire, and a coon rushed into the mouth of the log, and, losing his fear of man in his greater fear of the fire, crept to the further end of it, and, coiling himself into a ball, lay trembling.

"It's coming. God, have mercy on me!" cried the poor boy in mortal agony, as the terrible roar of the fire came like distant thunder to his ear. He reduced the opening at the entrance to the smallest possible compass, and awaited its approach.

In a few moments he was enveloped in a whirlwind of flame, that quickly dried the moisture from the leaves, brush, moss, and small limbs, and

they blazed up in sheets of flame, whose forked tongues entered the orifice he had left for air, and set on fire the rotten wood inside. He put it out with some wet mud, and stopped the entrance. The inside of the log became so heated that the sap fried from the wood, and dropped scalding hot upon his hands and the back of his neck, and the fire to the terrified boy seemed to be burning through. The smoke entered through crannies caused by the cracking and drying of the mud, and he could breathe only with the greatest difficulty.

“I shall die now, surely,” cried the poor boy; “God, have mercy on me!”

In despair he made a small opening for air, but there came, instead, fresh volumes of smoke. He instinctively buried his face in the wet moss, when he found, to his surprise, that he could breathe much easier.

He now perceived through the opening, that the great rush of fire had passed on, the heat diminished somewhat, and the scalding sap ceased to drop. The thought flashed across his mind that there might yet be hope: covering his mouth and nose with the wet moss, he removed a little more of the mud, and looked out: here and there were little

columns of flame wherever there was dry stuff left unconsumed ; but there was no exit yet, for, directly before the mouth of his retreat, a column of flame was rising from the hollow stump from which the old birch was cut, and the entrance was strewn with coals which the wind kept alive, but which were gradually dying out on the moist ground.

Fred, grateful for life, was in an excellent frame of mind to exercise the virtue of patience, and, kicking out the mud wall behind him, enjoyed a free circulation ; in doing this, he touched the coon with his foot, who merely raised his head, without offering to move farther.

“ Poor coonie,” said Fred ; “ don’t be frightened ; you shan’t be hurt ; we are brothers.”

It was now sunrise, and Fred heard voices calling him at a distance. Knowing he could not be heard from the log, he put his cap on the pointed stick which John had left in the hollow log, and crawling as near to the end as the heat would permit, stuck it up in a slanting direction.

It caught the eye of John. “ Look there,” he cried ; “ he’s alive ; he’s dug a hole in the ground.”

“ No, he hasn’t,” said Charlie ; “ he’s in the big birch — the coon tree.”

In a moment the boys clambered up a tree, from

whence they ascertained his real situation. They set off at full speed to tell Sally, who had gone home to see to the baby.

It is impossible to describe the joy that filled their hearts, although qualified by the fear that he might be terribly burned.

"We'll have him out," said John; "we'll get some switches and beat out a path."

"Let me plan, John," said Charlie.

"Well, go ahead; only get him out."

"We'll take a bucket of water apiece, and the switches, and then, when our shoes get hot, we can dip our feet in the water, and with the water we can put out the fire around the log, so he can get out."

"Wait a moment," said Sally; "I'll put on a pair of breeches and take a pail of water too."

"No, mother," said Charlie; "you carry the switches, and we'll take four pails and fill them at the brook as we go."

Armed with hemlock boughs, they beat out the fire, putting their feet in the pails when they could endure the heat no longer.

"I won't believe but what he can hear us now," said John.

"I'll halloo," said Sally; and she screamed in the

shrill tone in which women in the country call the men to dinner.

"Ay, ay," came in a hollow, stifled sound from the log.

"Are you much burned?"

"Not a mite; but I can't get out for fire."

"Thank God."

As they approached, conversation became easier.

"How came you to get penned?" asked Charlie.

"I chased a coon."

"What a fool you was to chase a coon into the fire!"

"I hadn't set the fire then; but I dropped my brand, when I ran after the coon, without thinking, and when I was gone, it blazed up and cut me off."

They soon reached the log, put out the fire, and liberated Fred from his durance, half suffocated with smoke, covered with mud and rotten wood, and pale and exhausted with recent apprehensions of a terrible death.

He was received as though from the grave; he was so weak they led him to the house; but after being washed, his eyes cleaned from smoke, and having taken food, he revived, and appeared as well as ever.

"What do you suppose I had in that log with me?" asked Fred.

"A snake," said John.

"No, a coon; he was so afraid of the fire, he ran in, just as I was going to stop the hole up, and cuddled right down with me."

"I guess that was his hole," said Charlie, "and the one we've got was his mate."

"I guess so too," said Fred; "and I should like, as long as he has been through so much with me, to let them both go."

"So we will," said Charlie; "we'll go up there now and catch that one, cut both their ears so as to know them, and let them go, call them Fred's coons, and never shoot them." After that performance they went to bed in the middle of the afternoon, to make up their lost sleep, and recover from their fatigue.

This severe lesson was not thrown away upon Fred; it produced an impression that remained through life, and was, no doubt, the reason of no future accidents of that kind.

Arrayed in suits of tow cloth, which they could wash in the brook when covered with smut, they chopped and niggered off the unburned logs, and, with the oxen, twitched them together, and rolling

them up in great piles, burned them. Here, in the evening, they roasted their lobsters, clams, and fish, and invited Sally up to help them eat.

They planted their burn, and while waiting for the corn to get big enough to hoe, began to fall trees for the next year's burn. Having succeeded, to their great joy, in getting their planting done before Captain Rhines and Thorndike, they took occasion to go over to meeting, and tell of it.

They now exerted themselves to the utmost to beat them in hoeing, and, having accomplished it, they set out, after dinner, for the main land; and, arraying themselves in great coats and mittens, went out to the field where Captain Rhines and his men were hoeing.

"When did you finish hoeing, Charlie?" asked the captain.

"Indeed, sir," said Charlie, "it was so long ago, I can scarcely remember; most time corn was *in*."

"Now," said John, shivering and thrashing his hands, as though suffering with the cold, "rather think the ground will shut up to-night."

"Won't you stop to supper?" asked the captain.

"Much obliged to you, sir; we must get home:

got some turnips to get in ; afraid they will get froze in ;" and off they started back again.

"Those boys feel about right now," said Captain Rhines, looking after them ; "only see them strut. They won't freeze, with great-coat and mittens, and the thermometer up to 90°."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BIRDS COME TO ELM ISLAND.

THE boys now allowed themselves the time after supper for relaxation. They got the "Twilight" out in all the glory of her new paint, and of those bright colors the English captain had given Charlie. They put a keel on her, so she would hold a wind. John was so delighted with her performance, that he determined to put one on his canoe.

"Go and get her, John," said Charlie, "and we'll put it on. I'll give you paint to paint her just like mine; then we'll run races."

No sooner said than done; and off they started, just at dusk, to row six miles and back, by way of rest and recreation.

"I'm not going to have any more frights, or accidents," said Charlie; "we won't fall separate trees; but two shall chop together, while one lops the limbs, and we'll take turns."

Whenever a tree was ready to fall, the two, who

were felling it, would call to the other, and see that he was out of the way.

They contrived, with all their hard labor,—for it was very hard work to chop among the black flies and mosquitos in the heat of summer,—to have considerable fun, by making what they called drives. They would chop a great many trees nearly off, then some others not quite so much, others still less; then they would pick out the biggest tree they could find, that stood in the right place, and after getting it almost ready to fall, go to dinner; when they came back, a few blows of the axe would bring down the great tree on those just tottering to a fall.

Crack, crack, snap, roar, would arise from the forest, the broken branches fly high up in the air, the tremendous weight and momentum drive down those that were not more than half cut off, break down, and break the tops and limbs from many others. Then they would hurrah, and take a short nooning. This saved a deal of chopping, so many were broken off that were not more than half cut. Those that had the tops broken off were not touched, as they could cast no shade to injure a crop, and the fire would kill them.

“Are there any baskets at the mill?” asked Charlie.

"Yes," said Fred; "and my little brother will sell them, while I'm gone."

"You know those sallies I cut off last year?"

"Yes."

"Well, they've all sprouted; and I'm going to whiten them, and make some baskets very different from those they have round here; it must be done now, while the bark runs; if you'll help me whiten them, rainy days, and after supper, I'll make them into baskets, and give you half profits."

"What is whitening them?" asked John.

"Peeling the bark off."

Charlie got out two pieces of oak, two feet in length and two inches square; about eight inches of the length, at one end, he left square, and from thence he tapered them gradually, and brought one side of each piece to a sharp bevel; he then fastened the two pieces together, with the bevels facing, something like a clothes-pin; you could put your finger in at the top, but at the lower end it came to nothing. He then mortised it into a plank laid across the barn floor; this machine he called a brake.

They cut a lot of willows, and Charlie, taking a rod, put about a foot of the but-end into the brake, and, nipping the prongs together with his

left hand, pulled it forcibly through; this broke the bark: he then turned it, and pulled it through the other way, loosening the bark, and leaving it hanging in strips. Flinging that down, he caught up another. John and Fred picked them up, and, running the bark off with their thumb and fingers, threw them into a trough of water to wash off the sap, which, if not removed, would cause them to turn black; they must also be dried directly, or they would become dark, as the sap of willow is a dye. As there was no sun at the time of their working, they dried them by the kitchen fire.

Charlie told them that this brake would wear out soon, but that, when properly made, there was a piece of iron or steel wire put on the inside, instead of a wooden bevel; and he said the willows would not look so white, dried by the fire, as by the sun on a clear day.

The boys were much pleased with their new work, and admired the bundles of white rods.

Charlie said they were not smooth, tough, and fine-grained, like the English sallies, but that, when he had time, he could make quite handsome baskets of them, and meant to make little Ben a carriage.

The garden now presented a most attractive

sight, and the more so from the rude surroundings — the vast masses of forest in the background, the craggy overhanging cliff, with its pendent birches; their massive roots bleached and blistered with the suns of many years.

The new visitants took kindly to the deep, moist furrows of the virgin soil, and, rioting in an excess of nourishment, thrived apace. No portion of the soil could be seen through the luxuriant growth. With such care had they taken up the rose-bushes, so much of the original soil adhering to them, and so carefully had they transplanted and persistently watered, that Sally, in one of her frequent visits, discovered no less than ten buds on the white and four on the cabbage rose-bush.

But what was her astonishment, when, looking over the tops of the peas, — which were stuck with high bushes, — she beheld cucumbers, squashes, watermelons, and cranberry beans, almost ready to run.

“Why don’t you have poles to your beans, Charlie?”

“I’m going to, mother, now you have found me out.”

If Sally was equally surprised and delighted, Charlie was, if possible, more so, when, as he rose

the next morning, he saw two robins on the cherry tree. Calling Sally, they gazed at them from the window with the greatest interest, as they flew down to feed among the plants.

“O, mother, they have come to see our garden, dear little creatures; do you think they’ll stay?”

To his great joy they remained the whole day, flying from the garden to the grass ground, into the corn and rye, and up among the birches, spending some time in the elms by the brook; and just before sunset they were singing in the top of a maple.

“I don’t believe they’ve gone,” said Charlie, who had watched them as long as he could see. The next morning he came rushing into the house with the news that the birds were carrying straws and sticks into a birch on the high ledge, and had a nest on a limb that hung directly over the garden.

“Mother, we’re getting civilized—ain’t we?”

“Indeed,” said she, laughing, “I was in hopes we were civilized before.”

The next week some ground sparrows came, and more than twenty swallows alighted on the roof of the barn; but, finding no place of entrance, they departed, after stopping an hour or two.

No sooner were they gone, than Charlie took a

ladder, and made a hole, the shape of a heart, in each end, near the ridge-pole. In about ten days they came back; it was singular how soon they found the holes. They remained all day, exploring every part of the barn, and the mouth of the brook, dipping their wings as they skimmed over the water, and departed, leaving Charlie comforted with the thought that they would certainly come back the next year.

Hitherto this lone isle had been inhabited by the wild rovers of the sea and shore; but the upturned furrows, corn, grain, and flowers, had lured hither the birds, whose dwelling is with man and the culture he creates.

Charlie, by improving every moment, with the occasional assistance of the other boys, had made doors for the front side of the barn, hung them with wooden hinges made of elm, and painted them yellow with the ochre he had procured the year before at Indian camp ground; thus the first frame and shingle building on Elm Island, and the first to receive a coat of paint, was a barn.

The hay and grain were got in, in good order, but without making much show in the great barn.

“How I should like to see hay enough in this barn to make some show!” said Charlie; “all we’ve

cut this year don't fill one corner of the ground mow; but I've learned to mow and reap; that's some comfort."

One night, on a sailing excursion, the boys landed on an island that was uninhabited, and in walking over it from curiosity, they came to a large natural meadow covered with a tall rank growth of grass, and terminating at the shore in a salt marsh and creek, into which ran a small brook that drained the meadow. Here they sat down to rest and eat.

After running his eye over the meadow and marsh some time in silence, Charlie inquired of John to whom the island belonged.

"Joe Griffin's father owns this part we are on, and the upper end belongs to Sampson, of Wisconsin."

"What do they do with it?"

"Don't do anything; when they bought it, it was full of timber and wood. Griffin cleared his part, and burnt it over; last year he put cattle on it, but hasn't put anything on this year; the other part is all forest."

"Won't he cut this grass?"

"No, indeed."

"Nor the salt marsh?"

"No. Joe is gone with Ben, and Henry's gone a coasting: he's got more hay at home than he can out before it dries up."

"What a great thing it would be, if we could only have some of this hay, that's doing nobody any good, to fill up our great empty barn!"

"Ah, Charlie, I see what you are up to; you are itching to come on here and cut this hay, and get it in the barn before Ben comes home, and want me and Fred to feel so too."

"You are good at guessing, John."

"What do you say, Fred; shall we gratify this unreasonable creature, who don't care if he works us to death."

"I think it's a pity to disappoint him," said Fred; "he's a clever fellow."

"You know," said Charlie, "what the Godsoes, Pettigrews, and Chase folks said about us—that we were nothing but brainless boys; would play half the time, and not earn our salt, or else destroy more than we could earn."

"I know all that," said Fred; "but there never was a handsomer piece of corn or potatoes grew out of the ground, or cleaner of weeds, than is now growing on Elm Island."

"But suppose," said John, "they should find

out that we liked to burn Fred up alive ; wouldn't they crow, and say, We told you so " ?

" They never 'll have that pleasure," said Charlie, " for we never shall tell of it ; and mother has promised me that she won't tell even father. Now, if we could cut this hay and get it off, wouldn't they open their eyes, and wouldn't it be a feather in our caps ? "

" We can do it," said John ; " we can come on here Monday, bring our provisions, build a brush camp, and work till Saturday night. We can get our scow, bring her right into the creek, and put the hay in with poles, put the salt hay in as fast as we cut it, and dry it at home. "

" But," said Fred, " Mr. Rhines told us, after the farming was done, to spend our time clearing the land. "

" I don't care," said Charlie. " I know there is nothing we could do that would please father so much as getting that hay, because there is nothing he will need so much as oxen ; it is a great trouble to get them over to this island : he wants a heavy team to plough among the stumps ; we ought to keep six oxen, because we can't do as they do on the main — keep one yoke, and then run to the neighbors : people don't like to let their cat-

tle come on here in the hurry of spring work, for it might come a storm, and they not get them for a fortnight. Besides, we have to get the hay for them. It is not half the distance to carry this hay; no hauling or putting on a cart; but we can lay plank, carry it on poles to the scow, and then out again, and walk right into the ground mow with a great part of it; and if Mr. Griffin will let us have it, 'twill cost nothing but the cutting. I do believe father would buy four more oxen this fall, and plough the rye piece, if it wasn't such a trouble to borrow oxen, get them off and on, and the hay to feed them; and mother is so anxious to have some sheep," he cried, his eyes flashing, and jumping upright as he warmed with his theme.

"Why, Charlie," said Fred, "how handsome you look! If Mary Rhines could see you now, you would make your market."

"Will you ask Mr. Griffin, John?" said Charlie, blushing.

"I don't like to myself, but I'll get father to." Captain Rhines was so delighted with the pluck of the boys, that he not only obtained leave for them to cut the hay, but offered to take his men and help them get it off.

"I am much obliged to you, sir," replied Charlie, "but we want to see what we can do."

"Well, Charlie, I like your spunk. You know you must have good weather to get the hay off; so you can take the scow right over to Griffin's Island, and let her lie in the creek; then, whenever the weather is right, you can get your hay over; since you might lose a good chance if you had to come after it."

The weather proving propitious, the boys strained every muscle, cut and got off the hay without accident, finishing at noon of Saturday.

"I'm so tired I can hardly drag one leg after the other; but I am satisfied and happy," said Charlie, as he looked upon the noble pile of hay in the ground mow, and the salt hay on the scaffold over the tie-up, one end of which was full of rye. Forgetting fatigue in the exultation of successful achievement, they strutted up and down the barn floor with their arms over each other's neck, recounting the benefits which would accrue to Ben, and honor to themselves, from their efforts, till they had talked themselves into the best imaginable of humors with each other and all the world.

"We'll go over to meeting to-morrow," said

Charlie; "and let Sam Chase and the rest of them know what a parcel of boys can do, with nobody to see to them, or lay out their work for them. Won't Captain Rhines feel about right? He'll give me such a squeeze with his great hand, 'twill make the fingers crack."

CHAPTER XVII.

RACE BETWEEN THE BIRCH AND TWILIGHT.

MONDAY night after supper, Charlie was busily at work making a flax-brake.

"Come," said John, "Fred and I are going over to the wash rocks in the Twilight: there's three seals on there, and we are going to try to shoot one."

"I guess I won't go."

"O, yes, go; the flax ain't grown yet: you won't need this brake till next winter or spring."

"I don't think I'll go. I have been a long time about this at odd jobs, and I want to get through with it."

Fred and John had proceeded but a short distance when they perceived Captain Rhines and Aunt Molly in the birch, the old lady dressed in her best, a string of gold beads around her neck, at her side a knitting-sheath of Indian manufacture, in her lap a box made of birch bark, worked with porcupine quills, in which were her knitting-work

and sewing, and a bunch of tansy in her hand for a nosegay. She seemed perfectly at ease and at home in the frail craft, although timorous on board the Congress, a brig of two hundred tons—so great is the power of habit.

In the construction of the canoe, Uncle Isaac had displayed the perfections of his Indian education. The paddles were beautifully made and stained with different colors and carved; on the sides of the canoe were figures, in colors of red and blue, and the ends were worked with porcupines' quills.

"Benjamin," said the old lady, "how this takes a body back: it puts me in mind of the time when you and I—a boy and girl—went to Wiscasset in your father's birch; he had given you the meat and hide of a veal calf, and your mother had given me some butter and a piece of fulled cloth."

"Yes, Aunt Molly, with part of that money I bought the first pair of shoes I ever had on my feet; and when I put them on, I felt richer than I did last spring, when I took the money for the cargo of the Congress."

"How beautifully she sits on the water! just like a sea-duck," said Fred, gazing with delight on the graceful craft, obedient to the slightest motion of the paddle.

"Yes, boys," replied the captain, "I believe I can paddle this birch faster than you both can row that canoe, fine as she is in her gay colors."

"Do you want to try it, father?"

"Yes; get off even with me; I'll say, 'Her now.'"

The captain gave a powerful stroke of his paddle, shooting the canoe ahead, and then shouted, "Her now!" Having thus obtained the start, he kept it a good while, till, at length, becoming a little winded, the boys began to gain upon him, and it was evident would eventually win the race. This stirred the blood of Aunt Molly; the color came back to her cheeks, and the light of bygone days was flashing in her eyes, having been in her youth possessed of uncommon strength, and skilful with the paddle as an Indian squaw. The combined power of excitement and old memories restored to the shrunken muscles of the frontier woman a share of their former vigor.

"Give me a paddle, Benjamin, and I'll help you."

"It won't do, Aunt Molly; it will injure, and perhaps be the death of you."

"Not a bit of it; they shan't beat us. I'm pretty strong in my hands yet, and sartin I haven't forgot how."

Seizing the paddle, in spite of the captain's remonstrances, she wielded it with such power and skill that the boys were distanced in a moment.

"Mother! mother!" shouted Charlie; "see who's coming."

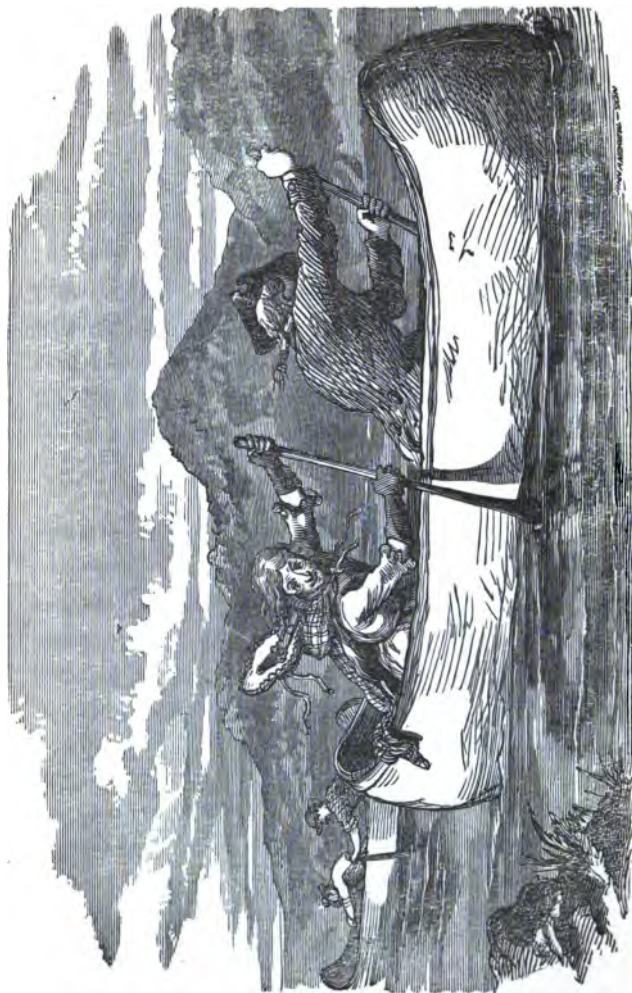
Taking for granted it was Ben in the Perseverance, she caught her hands out of the dough, and ran to the door, wiping them on her apron as she went.

With mutual astonishment they gazed on this novel race. Aunt Molly's bonnet strings had loosened, permitting the bonnet to fall back, and her white hair was hanging around her face, her eyes flashing with excitement, the perspiration standing in great drops on her face, and her knitting-sheath, the string of which had broken by the violence of her efforts, dangling at her side.

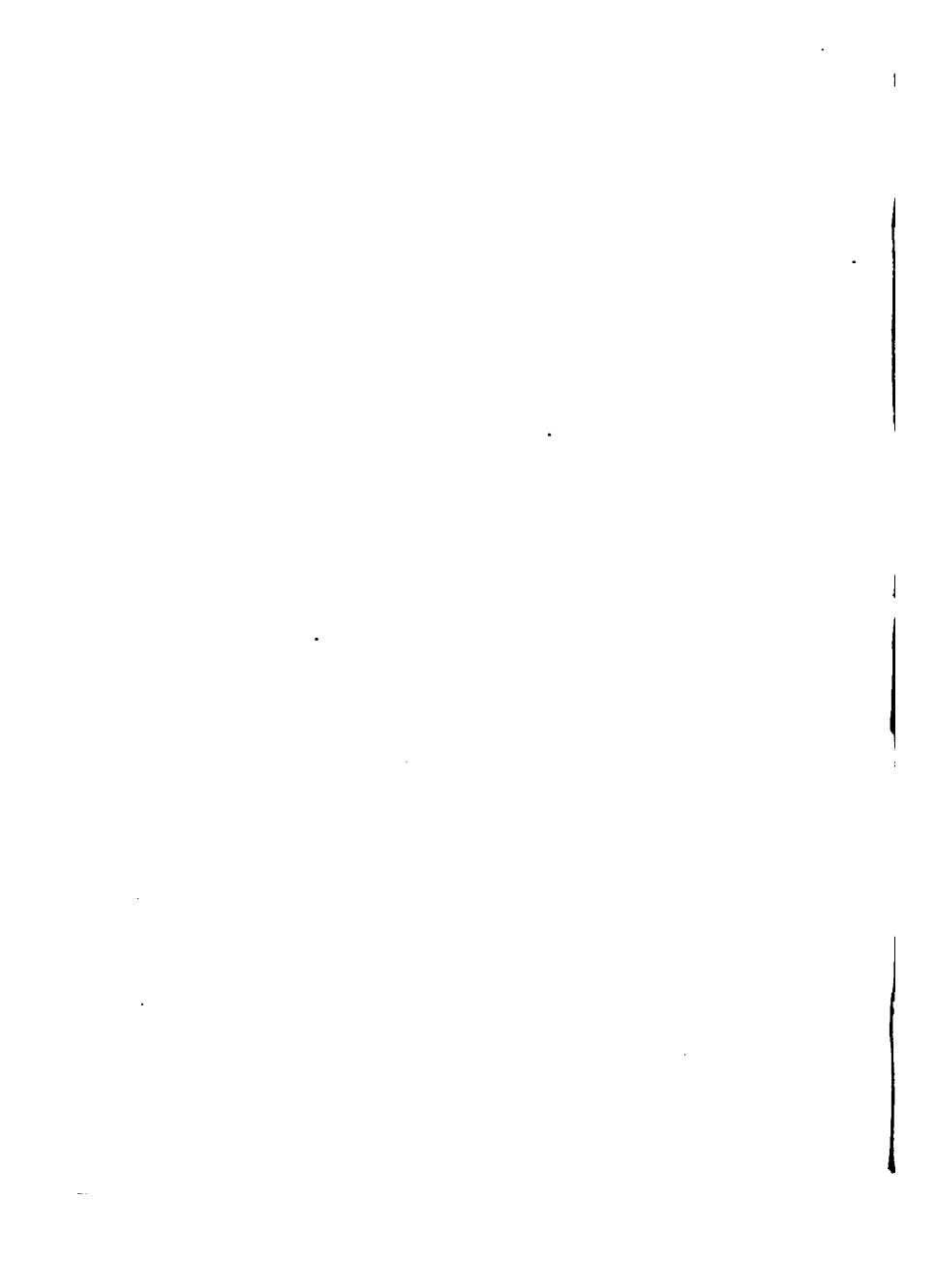
"Why, Aunt Molly, you dear old soul," cried Sally, "are you crazy?"

"Should think I might be, running races, with one foot in the grave; but then we've beat them — haven't we, Benjamin?"

Now the excitement was over, it was with difficulty that Aunt Molly, assisted by Captain Rhines and Charlie, could reach the house.



AUNT MOLLY BRADISH TO THE RESCUE. — Page 231.



"So you've arrived at a loom," she said, when seated in the front room. "I see you are getting ready to draw in a piece; what is it for?"

"A nice figured table-cloth."

"Wal, now, I want to show you a beautiful pattern that Benjamin's mother larned me; she was a great weaver; none like her in these parts. Now, if Charlie will bring up my things, I want to show you what I've brought you."

Charlie brought in two boxes of plants, in earth, and a large covered basket.

"Now let me tell you, dear. I took these roots up in the spring, but finding I wasn't coming, had William put them in earth, and have watered and kept them growing. There's comfrey root, — that's excellent for a sprain, — and tansy, wormwood, colts-foot; and there's saffron, — that's good for a driving tea, if the child has the measles, — and there's some balm, orange balm, — O, that's a beautiful drink, if anybody is feverish, so cooling; and it's so nice to scent dresses, or linen with, — and there's lovage and peppermint. Here," said she, uncovering the basket, "is some herbs to use till yours come on;" and the good lady produced a large and varied assortment of dried herbs, flagroot, poppies, burdock, horseradish leaves, thorough-wort, &c.

“Anybody might think strange that I should bring such things as burdocks; but you don’t have such things on a new place. When we first went into the woods, and the children were sick, I was dreadfully put to’t. I had to take skunk cabbage to dress a blister; but then we found some herbs and roots in the woods, that the Indians told us of. Now, Sally dear, I want to have a good cup of tea, pray to the Lord, and then I’ll go to bed.”

After tea, Sally, who was familiar with Aunt Molly’s habits, got the Bible, and put it in her lap.

The good old lady (after the death of her husband, who left her with a large family, at a time when there were no religious privileges) conducted worship in her own family with her children; and whenever she went on a visit to Captain Rhines’s, Uncle Isaac’s, and the widow Hadlock’s, they always requested her to do as she did at home. Captain Rhines, at her request, read a chapter, and the old lady prayed.

The next morning, to the astonishment of all, she manifested no ill effects from her efforts, but went to see the garden, and helped Sally draw the web into the loom.

The old lady was a real blessing and comfort in the family; she told them all the news that was

worth hearing, and could give Sally a great deal of information about many things, for she was thoroughly versed in spinning, weaving, coloring, and all the household manufactures of our grandmothers.

But a very short time elapsed before Charlie, who had Indians on the brain, after admiring the porcupine work-box, besought her to tell him an Indian story — just one.

“Tell him about your killing the Indians, please do,” said Sally.

Charlie, who was always much excited when any allusion was made to the Indians, dropped the powder-horn he was scraping, and got close to her feet.

“Don’t, Sally dear, ask me; I’m an old person, near my journey’s end, and ought to be thinking and talking of better things.”

“It would please Charlie so much!” pleaded Sally; “he was born in England, and never saw an Indian, or heard any such stories.”

“I think such stories had better be forgotten; the Indians will never trouble us any more; besides, the Scriptures say, ‘Let another man praise thee, and not thine own lips.’”

It was very evident the old lady disliked to recall the circumstances connected with the tale.

But Charlie, whose curiosity was excited to the utmost, exclaimed, "O, do, Aunt Molly; you know we shan't have you with us much longer to tell us stories."

"That is very true, Charlie;" and feeling, perhaps, that she ought to make the most agreeable return in her power for the hospitality she received, she began.

CHAPTER XVIII.

POOR SALLY DINSMORE.

"It was a good while ago, way back in the old French and Indian war, though it seems but yesterday to me. I was a rude, tearing critter then, and was ready with an answer for anybody.

"The Indian war broke out the second year after we were married, and went on to our land. We were very poor for some years, because we had to spend so much time in garrison that we could raise but little. We came out of garrison, the spring after my first child was born, in the winter, to try to get some seed in the ground, for we knew, if we didn't, we should starve to death the next winter; we brought our cattle, and went to housekeeping, though folks said it was a great risk. We had been so put to't for food in the winter, as to be obleeged to bile and eat our seed-corn. You may well think we were brought to death's door before we would do that;" and the old lady wiped away a tear, as she recalled the

misery of those terrible years. "My husband heard that he could get some by travelling five miles through the woods, and then going six more in a birch: he thought it would take him two days. 'Mary,' said he, 'I think you had better go back to garrison, while I am gone.' 'I guess not, Robert,' I made answer; 'there's been no signs of Indians about this spring, — I couldn't bear to be cooped up in garrison, it was so pleasant to be out in the sun, and smell the sweet spring air, and I dearly loved out-doors, — the cows are giving a good mess of milk, and it's so much better doing work in your own house, than being all mixed up there!' 'Mary, an Indian is a critter to be felt before he's seen.' But I was purposed.

"Sally Dinsmore, sister to old Mrs. Yelf, was staying with me (she was a Dinsmore before she married Sam Yelf); that reminds me of a speech of hern, that she didn't marry Sam for his beauty, nor yet for his riches, but for his excellent wit and wisdom."

"If he had been gifted with a great deal of either, he wouldn't have died drunk among the swine," said Sally.

"But where was I?"

"Telling about Sally," said Charlie.

“Wal, Sally was a smart piece, and said she would stay if I would.”

“You call me a terrible venturesome creature,” said Sally; “but you wouldn’t have caught me staying there alone, I can tell you.”

“I was young, then; brought up rough, as I told you; not much woman about me; more like a man, and proud-spirited; trusted to myself; didn’t know any other trust; and it was only two days; but *that* was not the raal groundwork of it.

“What was the groundwork?” asked John.

“Why, Robert was a fearless man, and set great store by for his courage, so that the savages were afeard of him; for it was sartain death to get within range of his rifle. I was all wrapped up in him, and thought p’raps he wouldn’t think so much of me if I was skeary. I thought ’twould be a bad sound to go abroad, that Robert Bradish’s wife was a coward.

“We had bullet proof shetters to the winders, and there was an overhang to the roof to fire down on anybody that come to break the door or set the walls afire, and there were loop-holes below: we had three guns and plenty of powder and balls; we allers had that. It was a good moon, and Robert went off in the middle of the night.

"I got up as airy as you ever did see. Sally and I were lotting to do a great day's work that day, as Robert was gone, and there was little cooking to hender. My old white-faced cow, that father gave me when I was married, held up her milk — a thing she never did before; but I didn't think anything on't. I put the cream into the churn, and I churned and churned, but it wouldn't gather; Sally, she churned and churned, but come it wouldn't.

"I said, 'Sally, there's some witchwork with this churn.'

"'Do you think so?' said she.

"'Yes, I know there is; I'm going to heat a horse-shoe and put in it, and that's a thing I never knew to fail.' I got the horseshoe red hot, and put it in, and we churned till we were both tired, but it wouldn't come together; 'twas all froth and little specks. If I'd had any sense or thought about me, I might have known all these things were forerunners, for when I put a piece of fish in the pot to bile for Robert, agin he came home, it all shrunk away; but I was too hity-tity to heed any signs sent for my good. Jest as it begun to grow a little dusk-ish, I seed a great black and white hog rooting round the hovel — Sally seed it first.

"She said, 'Mrs. Bradish, what hog is that?'

“‘Hog?’ says I. Then I looked. There he was a rooting round among the orts, and you could hear him gruffle. ‘Sally,’ said I, ‘as sure as you’ve got the breath of life in you, that’s John Godsoe’s hog, that they allers thought the bears carried off’

“‘Do you think so?’

“‘Yes, I know so. I’m as sure of it as I’m alive; for when Mrs. Godsoe was sick in garrison last winter, and her husband was gone, I used to feed him for her. There was no sich hog as that in the garrison.’

“‘But where’s he been all this time? They sarohed the woods, and hunted high and low for him.’

“‘Wal, he got wild, and was hid away somewhere, but now he’s got starved out.’

“‘It would be a dreadful thing for them to lose him, with a family of children. I mean to take the swill pail, call him into the hovel, and shut him up.’

“‘I would, Sally,’ said I. She took the pail and went out. I was busy baking a cake at the fire for supper. I heard her call, Chook, chook; and then I heard an awful scream. I ran to the door, and there was poor Sally dead on the ground, and an Indian in his war paint, tearing the scalp from her head.

“O, how Robert’s words flashed into my mind! ‘An Indian’s a critter to be felt afore he’s seen.’ I barred the door and two of the winders; the other winder was right at the head of the butt’ry stairs, that went down into the milk-suller; that was all the suller we had, and that wasn’t walled up. The winder had slats on it outside; before I could get there and shut the slide, an Indian had torn off the slats, and was head and shoulders into the winder.

“Robert had a sharp axe that he never allowed anybody to use but himself, but kept another for every day at the door. It was allers kept right behind the door. I looked at my baby sleeping in the cradle; it gave me strength. I caught up the axe, and drove it through the Indian’s head as though it had been a punkin, and, catching hold of him, pulled him in and shut the slide. He went head foremost down into the suller.

“The noise waked the baby; he was frightened, and began to scream. I ran to the fire to get a piece of the fire cake to pacify him, when, what should I see but the legs of an Indian in the top of the chimblly; the bed stood right in the room, for we had but two rooms; there was a hot fire on the hearth; I flung the straw bed right on the blaze; it caught in a minute, and down came an

Indian right into the fire, blinded and strangled with the smoke; before he could recover I beat him on the head with a great iron shovel I used to clear the oven with, till he stretched out on the hearth and couldn't move; then I finished him with the axe. I now caught the gun out of the hooks—for I didn't know how many more might be on the roof—and stood guard at the fireplace; but all was still, and when I looked up chimbly I saw nothing but the stars. The screams of the poor child went to my very heart; and what to do to pacify him I didn't know; he seemed to be afeard of me, and wouldn't nuss.

“At last I pulled the Indian's bullet-pouch, that was made of squirrel-skin, out of his belt, and gave it to him; and don't you think he was quiet in a minute, turning the bullets out in his cradle, and then back again, and tickling his own face with the squirrel's tail, and laughing as though nothing was the matter!”

“But where did the Indian come from so quick, to kill Sally?” asked Charlie.

“The hog was the Indian,” said John.

“Yes; the Indians had killed Godsoe's hog that he thought the bears got, skinned him, and one of them had got into his hide. I suppose when Sally

screamed, it was when the Indian jumped on her, and the next instant the tomahawk was in her head; the poor girl's 'sculp' was at the Indian's belt that came down the chimney."

"It was some satisfaction, at any rate," said Fred, "that you killed the Indian that killed her."

"If I had killed him first, it would have been a good deal more."

"I should have thought she would have seen his hands and feet," said Charlie; "he couldn't cover them with the hog-skin."

"It was in the dusk," replied Aunt Molly; "and besides, the poor girl never thought of such a thing as that, and wasn't looking for't."

"What did you do then?"

"I didn't know what to do. I thought the Indians might be setting the house on fire, went up stairs and listened, and couldn't hear any sound on the roof; looked down through the loop-holes on the overhang, but could see no Indians; then I looked out of the loop-holes below; looking out of the dark into the bright moonlight, I could see the smallest thing; there lay poor Sally's body, just as the Indian had left it. It was a terrible place to be in. On the hearth was the dead Indian, the blood running from him all over the floor;

in the milk-suller another one, the stairs covered with clotted blood, and my clothes and hands all spattered over.

“The sand had run down in the hour-glass, and I knew not the time of night.”

“How far was you from the garrison?” asked John.

“About a mile and a half. Then, for the first time in my life, I thought of asking help from above. I felt loath to lay down the gun even to wash the blood off. I seemed to feel stronger with it in my hands.”

“Didn’t you ever think of running to the garrison?” asked Sally.

“Yes; but I knew if the Indians were round, it would be sartain death. At length it seemed to me the Indians might know Robert was gone; might have seen his track, and that was the reason they came, for no Indian would stop to take a sculp within range of his rifle; then I thought if I fired the gun, they might think it was him, and that it would alarm the garrison at any rate, for they kept sentry all night. I put the gun out of the loop-hole and fired three times. A gun meant something in them days, and everybody knew the meaning. ’Twas but a few minutes after the last

gun before bang went the cannon at the block-house, roaring through the woods. I knew the Indians would hear it too, and it would daunt them. I didn't expect any one to come till daylight."

"Why not?" asked John. "I should think they would have come the moment they heard the guns, just as fast as they could run for their lives."

"Why, child, they had to come right through the woods, where they might have been ambushed by the Indians; there was but a handful of them, and they didn't know but there might be a hundred Indians, and they had their own wives and little ones to look after. I now washed the blood off my hands, and shifted my bloody clothes, and waited for daylight to come. O, how long, terrible long the hours seemed! Sometimes, when the fire would shine on the face of the Indian, looking so ghastly bloody, and painted awfully, I'd think he was coming to life; and I almost expected to see the other come crawling up the stairs.

"But daylight came at last: there was a knocking at the door. Who's there?"

"'It's me, Molly.'

"It was your grandfather, John, and Uncle Isaac's father, and the neighbors. But the first person that come into the house, pale as ashes, was

William Peterson, that was engaged for to be married to Sally. It cut me to the heart to look at the poor boy. 'William,' said I, 'nerve your heart to bear it like a man and a Christian.'

"'Is she carried off to Canada?'"

"'No,' I said. He knew too well by my looks what I meant; his gun dropped from his hand, and he kind of sallied away, and dropped on the floor. He was never the same man afterwards; he swore that he would have an Indian's life for every hair of Sally's head, and I don't know but he did, for he went into the woods and become an Indian-killer, like many others who met with the same trials. It was a costly thing to the Indians when they took Sally Dinsmore's sculp. That sobered me; both Robert and I learned, after that, to trust in a higher power than ourselves. We had no saw-mill to make boards; so we buried Sally in birch bark, as the Indians do: the grave is in our field; but there's a good stone to it now, that Robert put there. Poor William, nobody knows where he went."

CHAPTER XIX.

A NOVEL PET.

THE boys now returned to their work in the woods, but to their great grief, they were deprived of the society of Fred, his father falling sick. Fred was needed to take care of the mill.

A black fish, a species of whale, drifted ashore on the Great Bull. He was too much decomposed to afford any oil, but a multitude of horse mackerel (a species of shark that yield considerable oil), followed the black fish in from sea, and played in the eddy tide between the Little Bull and the eastern point.

After supper the boys amused themselves with catching them, by throwing the harpoon into the fish, and making the end fast to the canoe, which he would tow with great velocity a mile or more. It was rare sport, and profitable withal, as they afforded much oil; the oil, however, being in the meat, and not in the liver. Among these mackerel came a great sea-shark (a cruel fellow, that could

have swallowed a man in a moment), with lead-colored back, white belly, and a dark spot close to his forward fin.

"That's a real man-eater," said Charlie; "he don't belong round here; he's come in from the Gulf."

They went over and borrowed a shark hook of Captain Rhines, that had several feet of chain on it, so that he could not bite it off. The next night, as they were going out, they met him in the mouth of the harbor. They baited the hook, and, putting a rope to the chain, fastened it to a spruce tree on the end of the point, putting a half barrel to the chain to keep it from the bottom. They also fastened a smaller line to the buoy, and took it to the junk of pork, to keep the hook and bait from drifting ashore.

When they got up, the next morning, there was "my gentleman" fast, and keeping the whole harbor in a foam. He would run out of the mouth of the harbor till the rope brought him up, making the tree, to which he was fastened, quiver; he would then leap out of the water his whole length, lashing it to foam with his tail; he was thirteen feet long, and would weigh about fifteen hundred.

"We'll keep him, and tame him, and have lots of fun with him," said Charlie.

He now seemed so much exhausted the boys thought they might venture to have some fun with him, still keeping him fastened to the tree. They fastened another line to the chain, and Charlie took it over to the "chunk of pork," intending to pull him back and forth for their own amusement. The shark was quite submissive, following the impulse of the line till pretty well across, when, turning short, he pulled Charlie head foremost into the water; from which he scrambled out, roaring with all his might, as though actually in the jaws of the shark. John and Sally, who were looking on, were greatly amused, while the baby clapped its little hands, and screamed with delight. They now determined to make a jail, as John said, to put the murderer into solitary confinement.

At leisure times, after they had done work at night, they cut some long poles, and fenced the brook across, where it entered the harbor: sharpening the ends of these poles, they stuck them into the mud at low water, and when the tide was up, drove them down with an axe, by getting into the canoe. They then put a long pine pole across, from bank to bank; they fastened the stakes to it with wooden pins. They were a fortnight about it, and would have worked half the night, if Sally

had not called them in. They esteemed this the very height of enjoyment, although they would have complained bitterly had they been obliged to work so. Indeed, they wanted to build a camp, and live on the beach, but Sally persuaded them from it, telling them, that after Ben got home, they might build a camp, and turn Indians, if they liked. Charlie had heard so many stories from Uncle Isaac, which he had told over again to John, that they esteemed an Indian the perfection of all humanity, and thought it a great pity they came of civilized folks, and had not been born Indians, to enjoy the free life of the woods. When they had got the shark into his pen, they hitched the oxen to the rope, and pulled the hook out of his jaws. Notwithstanding, his natural voracity so overcame his sense of pain, that in a few days he came to eat whatever was thrown to him.

Ben now came home with a full fare of fish, having wet all his salt. The boys received a great deal of well-deserved praise from Ben, Uncle Isaac, and Joe, which amply repaid them for all their efforts. They went over to Captain Rhines's cove, to wash out and land their fish, which Uncle Isaac was to cure for them. There was no bounty on fishing in those days; therefore Ben was not obliged

to fish for any definite length of time. He accordingly brought the *Perseverance* into the harbor, after the fish were landed, intending to go after more by and by. The water at ebb tide left the creek, all but a little place, half mud, half water, where the shark lay.

"I wouldn't keep him in misery," said Ben; "either kill him or let him go."

The boys pulled out some of the stakes, and let him go. As Ben and the boys were chopping near the bank, they discovered a canoe approaching, and in it Joe Griffin, pulling with all his might.

"Joe is coming at such a rate, I'm afraid something has happened at home," said Ben. "Is anybody sick, or hurt?" he inquired, as Joe stepped from the boat, the sweat dropping from the end of his nose.

"No," gasped Joe, out of breath; "but that old merchant and his wife have come to your father's a visiting; he's going to bring them over here, after dinner, and, from what I heard, they calculate to stay all night, and more too. O, he's a grand old chap; his cane has a goold head on it as big as my fist. He's got a great wig on his head, as big as half a bushel, all powdered,

a cocked hat, ruffles round his wrist, silk stockings, and silver shoe-buckles. I wish you could see his hands; his fingers ain't bigger than bird's claws, with great long nails, just as white as snow; guess he never did much work. I should be scared to death to have them in the house."

Ben laughed.

"Well, I should," said Joe, "candidly. I expect 'twill start Sally a little: Charlie, go tell her."

What Charles told her I don't know; but it brought her to the beach in half a minute, her hair flying straight out from behind, from the rapidity of her motion, and her lips white.

"What shall we do?"

"Just what we always do: they won't think any better of us for making a great fuss; they are sensible people, and won't enjoy themselves if they think we are in agony all the time."

But Sally did make a fuss. Ben sent Charlie to help her, and went on with his work.

If Ben was less disturbed, in view of the expected visit, it must be remembered that he had been accustomed to see them at his father's, and knew their goodness; but poor Sally had only seen them at an awful distance, as they crossed her path

going to school, when she hid in the bushes till they got by; or in Captain Rhines's pew, on the Sabbath, when they seemed to fill the whole church with their presence. No wonder, then, that the idea of having them in her own house, was a little awful.

"If your mother, or mine, were only here," said Sally; "they've been about the world, and can talk with anybody."

Sally received them in the front room, with the baby in her arms, with some trepidation, which was immediately dispelled by the merchant's wife, who took the baby in her arms, who, in blissful ignorance of the distinctions of life, began playing with her gold-bowed spectacles. The old merchant then took her by the hand, told her that he had known her father well; that he respected her for bestowing her hand where she could place her affections; and in five minutes made her feel as much at home with him as if she had known him all her life. After supper, they went, in the cool of the evening, to the beach. The whole space bordering the water, with the exception of a small space around the buildings, and a little green extending from the garden to the

brook, was under tillage. Here Sally washed and dried her clothes, and bleached her linen. She had her wash-bench under a spreading birch, just where the water poured over the ledge, where Ben had fixed a spout to carry it into her tub. The house was approached by a foot-path through the corn, which grew to the water's edge, over the door of which was a hop-vine, its dark-green leaves hanging in masses from the dingy walls. The log fences and blackened stumps were relieved by the vegetation around them, and the blackberry and wild gooseberry bushes took root in their decaying bark; even the new barn, the most prominent object, had become toned down, by time, into harmony with prevailing tints. They pulled out in the bay, to view it to still better advantage. As the land rose gradually from the sea, the frowning masses of hemlock and pine in the swales were in beautiful contrast to the lighter foliage of the maples and oaks on the ridges by which they were separated.

"This," said Mr. Welch, as the fading light touched and tinged the scene, "is the sweetest spot I ever saw. The contrast between the two portions of the island, one cultivated and the other lying in all the unbroken grandeur of nature, is most fascinating."

Under the tuition of Charles, Mr. Welch soon learned to row, catch lobsters, and scull and paddle a gunning float. As he was a good shot, accompanied by Sailor, who would follow anybody who carried a gun, he would spend days gunning on the outlying rocks, or, with legs bare to his knees, wade round in the cove on the White Bull, to find crystals of quartz, while his wife would collect flowers and marine plants to press and dry. She also learned to fish. They would take a pot, potatoes, pork, and go away and catch fish; she would make a chowder on the rocks, cook the birds he killed, and finally became so hardy as to sleep in a brush camp at night. This new mode of life soon began to tell upon them; they regained almost the elasticity of youth, and their spirits rose in proportion: his cadaverous complexion acquired the hue of health, his bird's-claw fingers a wholesome brown, and assumed proportions which would have been respectable even in the eyes of Joe Griffin.

"I thought I was well before," said Mr. Welch; "but I now am half a mind to think I was sick; the night used to pass away, but it did not take my fatigue with it; I was as tired when I rose in the morning as when I lay down at night. It

seems to me I drink in strength with the very elements."

One night Sally went to milking, leaving her wheel in the floor, with some rolls on it; when she came back she found the old lady spinning.

"'Tis more than thirty years," said she, "since I turned a wheel; but I've seen the time I could spin my stint, and get done before four o'clock."

Ben was so highly gratified with the enterprise and forethought of the boys in getting the hay and raising such an excellent crop, that he determined to reward their diligence. It was not long before the opportunity offered.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW BEN REWARDED THE BOYS.

THE next night, while at supper, there was a terrible outcry from John, who had gone out before the rest. Running out, they found him up to his neck in water, holding on to the stringer that went across the shark-pen, kicking and splashing in the water, to keep a whole school of mackerel, that had gone in between the slats, from coming out. "Boys," shouted Ben, "if we keep these mackerel in till the tide ebbs, I'll give you three weeks holiday as soon as the fish are salted." Under such a tremendous incentive, the boys worked like tigers. Aided by Mr. Welch and Sally, they brought great quantities of brush, and handed it to Ben, who thrusting it in between the slats, pressed it down with his feet, till he had wattled the whole space. Uncle Isaac, the whole fishing crew, and many others from the main, coming over, the fish were soon dressed; the boys lost no time in reminding Ben of his magnificent promise. Showing no dis-

position to retract, Ben asked them in respect to their outfit. They were going to take John's canoe, guns and ammunition, blankets, a couple of hatchets, and two days' provisions.

"If I were going by water, as you are, and could carry it, I should want a fortnight's provisions, at least; a kettle and frying-pan, a tinder-box and matches, something to drink out of, and salt and tea."

"No," they said; "we don't want any of those civilized things."

"I see how it is," said Ben; "you've been talking with Uncle Isaac till you are as full of Indian as an egg is of meat. Now be ruled by me, and take fireworks, and a week's provisions, and an axe, besides your hatchets."

To this the boys reluctantly assented. They utterly refused to take fishing lines or hooks; but Ben, unknown to them, hid a flounder spear under the straw in the bottom of the canoe.

As they were about to start, Sally took Charles aside, and told him she expected he would keep the Sabbath, and not hunt or fish on the Lord's day. About eight miles from the island was a large bay, which, after running about ten miles into the land, terminated at the mouth of a stream,

which carried several saw-mills, in which lumber was cut, while vessels loaded at the tail of the mills. Here were a store and a little settlement. The bay was sprinkled over with islands of different sizes, uninhabited, and covered with wood and timber. To one of these, called, from the growth, Oak Island, they directed their course. It was connected by a bar, fordable at low water, to the main land, and inhabited by multitudes of gray and black squirrels. In a cove on its southern end they shot some coots, and, making a fire, cooked and ate them. They were so busy shooting squirrels that night surprised them before they were aware of it. Having no time to build a camp, they turned the canoe bottom up, crawled under it, and went to sleep.

They were occupied the forenoon of next day in skinning squirrels, and stretching the skins to dry. Charles wanted to make himself a cap, a pair of mittens, and a muff for his mother. As it would take them a good many days to get enough of these small skins, they determined to make a permanent camp, one that would stand a rain storm, and in which they could keep all their luggage. At the mouth of a little cove, with a sand beach abounding in clams, they found a spring of good water.

"Here's the place," said John; "now let's build a real Indian wigwam."

They set up a frame of poles, then peeled some large sheets of birch bark from the trees, then obtained a large quantity of spruce roots: of these they made thread, with which to sew their bark together. John made holes in the bark with the tail of a horse-foot crab. Charles used a squirrel's tooth fastened into a stick.

"Why don't you take the point of a file?" said John.

"Indians didn't have files."

They made so little progress with their wigwam, that they had to sleep under their canoe all night. They sewed the sheets of bark together, lapping them over each other like shingles; and as they wanted the fire inside when it stormed, they made a cap of bark to fit the top, with a space under it, to let the smoke go out, but so fixed that the rain could not beat in to any great extent. Never were any creatures more happy, as they sat chatting and sewing.

"I wish we had been Indians," said Charlie.

"So do I," said John. "What a good time they had, the bays full of geese and ducks, and the woods of deer, bears, wolves, beavers, and Indian

devils!" (wolverenes). It was night when they got their camp done and fire built. In the morning there was a gale of wind and a rain storm, but not a drop of water came through. Proud of their skill, they thought themselves veritable Indians.

With dry stuff from the inside of hollow trees, and white oak limbs cut short to take up less room, they built a hot fire in the middle of the camp. They lashed some poles across the upper part of the camp, and put sheets of bark on them for shelves, to put their guns, powder, and provisions on. They then drove some stakes in the ground on the side, and bent some poles around just the shape of the camp, and put on cross-poles and bushes: this served both for sleeping and sitting. They cut down a yellow birch, and cutting off a large log four feet long, put it in the camp, also an ash log. They then brought up everything from the canoe, and filled every spare corner with dry wood. By this time they were wet to their skins; but they now had all their material under cover, and stripping off all but their shirts, with a little brush before them to keep the fire from scorching their skins, Charles made dishes of bark to hold food and cook in. John made a wooden shovel from the birch log, and, going down to the beach,

dug some clams and shot a pair of gray squirrels.

"We'll cook these Indian fashion; we won't have the white man's pot," said John. They put water in a birch bark dish, and then putting in hot rocks, boiled the clams; they also scalded the squirrels till the hair came off, and then driving two crotches in the ground before the fire, put a wooden spit across, and roasted them; but it took so long to boil with the hot rocks, that they were almost starved before the clams were done. They pounded the ash logs, and procured basket stuff, with which Charles made a basket, with a bail to it, to hold their furs, and to wash clams in, and carry game.

"O, Charles," cried John, jumping to his feet, "couldn't you make an eel-pot with this basket stuff?"

"I can make anything that ever was made with basket stuff."

Under John's direction Charles made the eel-pot. Just at night they caught some flounders and lobsters with the spear Ben had put in the canoe. They could not fry in birch bark; so, much against their will, they had to fry their fish in the white man's pot; but they boiled their lobsters in the bark dish.

In the mean time, John had spent the greater part of the day in making fishing-lines of willow bark, which he stripped into long threads, and then twisted by rolling them on his thigh. They sat up a good part of the night at work upon the lines.

"I can't make the hooks, Charles," said John; "you must do that. I'm not Indian enough for that."

The next day, as they were shooting squirrels, they saw on a little ledge, not half a gun-shot from the shore, such a quantity of sand-birds that it appeared blue with them, crowding closer and closer together, as the rising tide narrowed their resting-place. Charles crept to the edge of the bank and fired.

"There are twenty dinners," said he. "John, go to the camp and put on the pot, and I will pick up some of them."

They were so fat, that after they were picked they looked like balls of butter.

"My mother never made anything half so good as these," said John.

"Your mother," replied Charles, "couldn't make the appetites we have here, nor this wigwam, and this wild place to eat in."

At night they went to their eel-pot, which they

had baited with flounders and horse-foot crabs, jammed up, and took out two dozen eels, which they skinned, and ate part of them for supper. As they had gone to camp quite early that night, while John was getting supper, Charles essayed to make an Indian hook. He took a piece of dry huckleberry bush, which is very hard, and made the hook in two pieces, lashing them together with thread made of squirrel skins. Meeting, as he thought, with good success, he made a number of different sizes.

In the afternoon of Saturday, at low water, they went on to a ledge where the rock-cod fed, and getting in among the kelp, where the water was very shoal, as their lines were short, they began to fish. They soon found that though they could hook the fish fast enough, more than half of them got away, as there was no beard to the hooks. They managed to get a dozen, and went back well satisfied, as they had done the thing.

"Indian lines do very well," said John, "but I don't think much of Indian hooks."

With the Sabbath came a heavy easterly gale, but without rain. As twilight came on, they went to the eastern shore to see the waves break. A few stars were faintly visible overhead; but the hori-

zon hung low with heavy clouds. Huge masses of rock, worked upon by the frost, and undermined by the waves, had fallen out from the perpendicular line of cliff into the ocean, over whose broken masses the surf poured in sheets of foam, while the wind that roared along the cliffs, diminishing as it entered the thick-woven arches of the forest, died away in sounds indescribably mournful.

The boys, sitting upon the edge of the cliff, put their arms over each other, and moved nearer together, as the wild cry of the loon—the bird of tempest—rose from beneath their very feet.

“How solemn this is!” whispered Charles, as they listened to the wild wail of the tempest, and watched the white surf, pouring over the frowning masses of rock, black with sea-weed. No sound of animal life was heard, as they felt their way through the black mass of forest to the camp: nought but the roar of surf, the moan of the night wind, and the creak of swaying branches. It was with a feeling of relief they came in sight of the blazing fire. When Monday came, the sea was too rough for their canoe.

“It will die away by afternoon,” said John, “and then we can go on to ‘Smutty Nose;’ it’s a great place for coons and sea-fowl. In the mean time let

us make a fire Indian fashion; we set out not to bring any fire-works, and here we have been a whole week, and haven't done it yet."

"Do you know how?" said Charles.

"I know what Uncle Isaac told me; he said the Indians had no other way of getting fire till the white men came."

"Well, go ahead."

"Do you go and get me some toadstools — 'fungus' — off a birch tree, and put them in the kettle and dry them."

"What is that for?"

"That is Indian tinder — 'spunk.'"

John now took a pine slab, which he had kept in the camp by the fire for some days, and with a file made a shallow hole in it. He then took a piece of dry white oak about three feet long, and made it round, and pointed the end to fit the hole in the slab; then they crumbled up the spunk and put it in the hole, and Charles, taking the spindle between the palms of his hands, whirled it back and forth, bearing down with all his might, till his hands slipped down, and then John took it; they made the smoke rise like everything, but no fire to catch the tinder.

"I've blistered my hands now," said John; "let's

give it up till we have squaws to do it for us; we shan't get to Smutty Nose to-night."

"O, don't let us give it up," said Charles. "I see what is the matter; the spindle is not heavy enough, and the whirling of it flings the spunk out of the hole."

He sat down on the ground and scratched his head, and reflected: at length he went to the beach and got a flat stone, and with the hatchet made it round; he then took a spike from the canoe, and drilled a round hole in the middle of it, and slipped it on to the spindle, and fastened it. He now enlarged the hole around the spindle, and took out the wood, making a cup an inch and a half deep, so as to hold the spunk. They now both took hold of the spindle, and in a few moments the spunk was on fire, so as to kindle brush. The weight increased the friction, and the cup kept the tinder in the place of greatest heat. They had succeeded, but were so long about it, that it was almost sun-down, and they had eaten nothing since morning. They resolved not to get fire any more Indian fashion.

Tuesday morning they set out for Smutty Nose; it was full of hollow "stubs," and trees prostrate and hollow, that had been killed by fires.

"I don't think much of the Indian fashion of getting fire, and we can't afford powder to get it very often with a gun. Let us go to the store at the head of the bay, and get some brimstone and a flint, to strike fire; we can make tinder out of the lining of my cap, or take spunk."

"Agreed."

As they were going to the boat, an eagle came scaling along the ground after dead eels. Charles shot him, and they put his feathers in their hats. The next morning, they started before day, and, sailing and rowing, were at the store by sunrise. They obtained their brimstone, some fishhooks, and a flint which took all their money. Calling at Oak Island, they got their kettle, and putting the brimstone in it, melted it, and dipped some little slivers of dry pine in it, which made matches; they burned the lining of Charlie's cap for tinder; they had a spare powder-horn; Charlie took the bottom out, and it made a good tinder-box. They could now strike a spark from the flint into the tinder, touch a match to it, and have fire easily.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN INLAND ADVENTURE.

"I NEVER was on a fresh-water river in my life," said John; "let's get somebody to haul our canoe around the dam, and go up that river."

"Perhaps we couldn't find anybody."

"Yes; I know we could get some farmer's oxen, and drive them ourselves, as there are always teams there hauling lumber."

"We've spent all our money."

"Now we've got hooks, let us catch some fish, and I'll make some baskets, and give to some one to haul her round."

This being agreed upon, John caught the fish, while Charles made the baskets; and, taking what eels were in the pots, they started. Arriving at the store early in the morning, they were taking out their baskets on the beach, with the eagle's feathers in their hats, when a well-known voice exclaimed, 'Halloo! what's this? Indians?' And, looking up, they, to their great joy, beheld Joe

Griffin, with a chain on his shoulder, and a goadstick in his hand.

"Why, Joe," cried John, "what are you doing here?"

"Twitching logs into the mill-pond."

"O, Joe," said Charles, putting both hands on his friend's shoulders, "father has given us a holiday, and we've got a birch bark wigwam on Oak Island. O, it's just the nicest thing you ever did see, and sheds the rain just like a duck. We've caught eels with an Indian hook, and shot squirrels and coons, got fire Indian fashion, made an eel-pot, and we've brought these baskets to sell for powder, and these eels and fish to give some one to haul our canoe round the falls; that's all," said Charles, stopping for want of breath.

"Enough, too, I should think," said Joe. "I'll haul your boat round for you, and you in her; I've got four seven-foot oxen here."

"Then we'll give you the fish."

"No, you won't. I'll take a mess up to Ike Libby's, where I stop, and you can sell the rest."

By Joe's advice they bartered their fish for pickrel lines and hooks.

"We want to shoot a deer," said Charlie.

"I warrant you do," said Joe; "never knew a

youngster that didn't, — have a weakness that way myself. Do either of you know how to scull a gunning float to shoot coots?"

"Yes, both of us," cried the boys in a breath.

"Well, then, I'll cut a scull-hole in your canoe, and you can scull to a deer."

Joe cut the hole, and borrowed a paddle for them. He then borrowed Mrs. Libby's frying-pan, and fastened it on the head of the canoe.

"Now," said Joe, "pull them eagle's feathers out of your heads, and go up with me to Ike Libby's to dinner."

After dinner, Joe hauled the boat round, and put her into the water above the falls.

"Now boys, attention! Go up the river till you come to a place where it is very narrow, and full of great rocks, and logs piled up on them, and a dead pine that leans over the water. Just beyond this the river widens out, and the banks are low, and full of alders and willows, and there is a large interval on the right hand; that is the place for you to camp. When it comes dark, put some pitch knots and birch bark in the frying-pan, and make a blaze; when the deer come to feed on the interval, they will see it; then one of you scull along the bank, just as easy as though you

was sculling to the shyest wild goose, and the other take the gun; the light will kind of amaze them, and while they are wondering at it, you can hit them. Sometimes they will go a mile after they are hit; you can track them the next morning by the blood, if they are hit bad; if they ain't, it is no use to follow them."

Thus instructed and provisioned, the boys pulled up the river. To them, accustomed all their lives to the sea-coast, all was new and delightful.

"There are no breakers or waves here," said John, "no kelps or rock-weed, and you can't tell what clock it is by the tide. It is beautiful, but I should think it was a poor place for a man to get a living, that had nothing but his hands; there are no clams, nor fish, to speak of; it is not half so good a place to get a living as an island."

They found the place without difficulty by Joe's description. They gazed with awe upon the enormous growth that, untouched by the axe, stood in all the solemn grandeur of nature; the hoary ruins of mighty trees lying in all directions, as time or the tempest had prostrated them. To them, accustomed to the forests of the coast, noisy with the screams of countless sea-birds, the silence, so profound that they could hear the beating of

their own hearts and the fall of an acorn, seemed fearful. John shot a couple of partridges, and the echo of the gun startled them. They built their fire before the root of a tree that the wind had turned up, and, placing some poles against it, threw some brush over them for a shelter from the wind. When it grew dark, they kindled their light in the canoe, and sculled along the shore the greater part of the night, but saw no deer, and heard nothing but the bark of a fox or the distant howl of a wolf. As the boys, after their return, lay upon the brush, they turned uneasy glances to the forest, for they felt less secure from nocturnal visitors than when on the island.

"I despise this silence," said Charles; "I wish I could hear the surf."

Going to their canoe in the morning, they found the greater part of their pork gone, and tracks on the sand, which John said were those of a wolf. They found he had carried off the largest piece to his den, saw where he had stopped to eat part of it, and tracked him more than a mile, till they lost all trace at the foot of a perpendicular cliff, that abutted on the river. Following along at its foot, John saw some grains of salt and little pieces of bone that had fallen

from it, and finally discovered the den in the face of the cliff. They endeavored to smoke him out, but without success, as there was evidently no draught to make the smoke enter.

"I know he is in there," said John, "for I can smell him, and see the hair where he has rubbed going in."

In vain they strove to find some crevice. At length, Charles, creeping on his knees over the top of the rock, found where a tree had once thrust its tap-root down into a fissure in the ledge: might not this communicate with the den? The idea was sufficient to stimulate to the greatest efforts. They hacked the old root with hatchets, and pulled out the chips with their fingers; when they could no longer reach it with hatchets, they built a fire on it, but it smouldered, without consuming. They then made the flounder-spear red hot, and burnt holes in it, and cut up the charred wood. At length, worn out with labor, they sharpened a stake of hornbeam, and, with the axe, drove it through into the den, and, pushing the root through, made a hole four or five inches in diameter. They now removed the stones with which they had filled the mouth of the hole to keep the wolf in while they were at work, and,

building a fire of green brush and pitch-wood, their object being to make the most thick and pungent smoke possible, they stood ready with their guns. The smoke now began to pour out from the hole in the top as from a chimney; still the wolf refused to come out.

"Now a little more green brush on the fire, Charlie," said John.

"I'll fix him."

John gathered an armful of moss, and, when the smoke was pouring out its full volume, stuffed it into the hole on top; the smoke, suddenly arrested, became so dense in the cave, that, unable to endure it longer, the wolf leaped over the burning brush, and made for the woods. Charles fired, and broke his leg, as he tried to ascend the ledge. John struck him in the back; so that with the breaking of his hind leg, and the shot in his back-bone, his hind parts were nearly useless. Still the hard-lived brute, sitting upon his fore paws, faced his foes, snarling with rage and pain, and frothing at the mouth.

"He can't get off," said John; "let's have a look at him."

"Ain't you sorry you stole that pork?" said Charles; "see what it has brought you to. I

have no doubt the blood of many a poor sheep and little innocent lamb is on your conscience."

"See how shamed he looks," said John.

As the boys had but little powder, they determined not to shoot him, but kill him in some other way. Charles, with the flounder-spear, attacked him in front, while John crept up behind him, and knocked him on the head with the axe.

"That is the reason," said Charles, "we could get no deer; they scented this fellow."

It is impossible to describe the triumph with which the boys skinned the wolf. They washed the hide in the river, and scraped it, then stretched it on sticks to dry, so as to make it as big as possible. They now examined the hole. It was large enough to creep into, about eight feet long by ten in depth, and high enough to stand upright in. They filled it with brush, and burnt it out to purify it, and, sweeping out the coals and ashes, carried in some hemlock brush to sleep on, and made a camp of it, in which they spent the Sabbath. Monday they caught pickerel, which was a new experience to them, and afforded them much sport. While Charlie was wading in the brook, catching frogs for bait, he came across something sticking out of the sand, and, pulling

It out, exclaimed with astonishment, "O, John, here is a fresh-water clam!" They found it was shaped like those in the salt water, but of a different color, and a much thicker shell, so it was very hard to break; they were also not so deep in the sand, but sticking out of the ground; they collected a good many, and baited with them, but they could not eat them. That night they put the light in the canoe, and, sculling along the bank, they listened and longed for some intimations of the presence of deer. At length they heard the animals cropping the herbage, and almost suspended their breath to listen. In a few moments a pair of glaring eyeballs were seen through the darkness, and the head and shoulders of a deer were visible, as the animal, apparently fascinated by the light, approached the very edge of the water. The gun flashed, and at the report the deer, leaping forward, fell headlong into the water, perfectly dead. They hung the carcass on a tree, and pulled silently up the river three or four miles to an interval, where they succeeded in getting another.

"This is better than shooting gray squirrels," said Charlie.

They skinned their deer, and hung them on

trees, to keep them out of the way of wolves. The next day they found some coons in a place where a whirlwind had passed years before, and the fallen trees hollow and broken off; many of them lay in all directions; and in a run near by, a number of muskrats. The boys longed to explore the woods, but were afraid of getting lost. At length they determined to follow up a small stream, that ran into the river, knowing they could trace it back to its mouth. They went up a short distance in the canoe, till they came to an old beaver dam, that barred their progress, and then followed along the bank of the little stream. Seeing, at a short distance, a little ridge covered with oak and beech, they determined to ascend it. Fearful of losing their way, they spotted the trees with their hatchets as they went, that thus they might have a guide on their return. Seeing a great number of crows flying around the tops of a large oak, they approached it; when, to their astonishment, they beheld a black bear in a crotch of the tree, eating acorns. The crows would, once in a while, light on the tree, and help themselves to acorns; but their chief occupation was screaming at the bear, who, paying not the least attention to them, munched his acorns.

The boys' hearts palpitated with excitement, not unmixed with apprehension. Charles had never seen a bear, or any beast of prey, save the wolf they had just killed; but John had seen them frequently, and they had taken hogs from his father's pasture. He had set guns for them, and seen them caught in traps, and knew something of their habits. The boys, while getting their courage up, crept behind the root of a tree to view him. Notwithstanding his clumsy appearance, the bear sat in the crotch of one of the limbs as cleverly and as much at home as a monkey; he would reach out his paw, and taking hold of a limb as large as a man's arm, bend it in, sometimes breaking it off, and eat the acorns. Within half a gun-shot from the tree a large spruce had blown down, and falling across a smaller tree, lay up breast high from the ground. Behind this the boys crept: it afforded an excellent cover, and a rest for their guns while taking aim. They consulted whether one should reserve his fire, or both should fire at once, and finally concluded that it was risking too much to have both guns empty at the same time. John, concluding that his nerves in the face of a bear would be steadier than Charlie's, told him to fire first, and then load as quick as possible. Charlie

fired, and the bear, evidently wounded, instantly began to descend the tree. As he came down they saw that the shot had entered his eye, causing great pain, and he howled with agony. John knew that it is the nature of the brute, when surprised, to stand upright on his hind legs; he ran to a bush near the foot of the tree, and, as the bear stood snuffing the air and looking for his enemies, with a shout jumped from behind it; the bear, surprised, stood up, exposing his whole breast, when John, at short range, poured the whole charge into his vitals, and he rolled over dead at the foot of the tree. It was impossible to carry the carcass to the boat; so they took the skin and some little of the meat, and, reluctantly leaving the remainder, returned to the cave.

"I think," said Charlie, "we've had such luck that we better start for home; if we stay any longer, something will happen to us."

"I think so too," said John; but the next day proved rainy, and they were confined to the cave.

"I can't do anything else; I'm going to make an Indian pot," said Charles.

He mixed his clay with sand, and worked it free from stones; then made a basket the size of the

pot, and covered it with the clay to the thickness he wanted the pot; made a rim round it, and set it to dry. Charles wished to finished his pot directly, as they were going to start for home the next day. He therefore kept gradually moving it nearer to the fire to dry it by littles. When it was dry, he made an oven of stones, and baked it slowly till it was red hot, and, burning out the basket, it came out a pot.

"I'll carry that home," said he, not a little proud of his success, "for mother to bake beans in."

He now put a withe round it, which the rim kept from slipping off, and put clay on the withe to prevent the fire from burning it off, and stewed meat and boiled pork in it.

It was Saturday night, and Ben, having finished his week's work, was holding the baby, when the door opened suddenly, and with a shout that made the house ring, Charlie and John rushed into the room. When the surprise and greetings were over, Charlie said, "Guess what we've got in the canoe."

"Scalps, I suppose. I see you have mounted the eagle's feather."

"Well, you never could guess, if you guessed all your lifetime; so come and see."

They went to the canoe.

"Ain't we Indians!" cried John, holding up the wolf-skin.

"Ain't we worthy to wear the eagle's feather!" said Charlie, holding up the bear-skin.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. WELCH AND UNCLE ISAAC.

WHILE the boys were gone, Ben had bought Griffin's Island entire, four oxen and twenty sheep, and put them on there, had fenced out the swale where the boys cut the hay, and the marsh, for a hay-field, as there was pasture enough on the island without it. Sheep will thrive and do well upon an outlying island where the snow remains but a small part of the winter, as they will greedily eat Irish moss, dulse, and kelp, and thrive on it, with what little old fog they get from the ground, and the addition of a very little hay when a sleet storm prevents them from getting to the shores; thus Ben's sheep were provided for the year round. This island also afforded pasture and hay for his cattle, while he was clearing up and getting into grass his land on Elm Island, and was but half the distance from him to the main land; and he intended in the winter to build himself a scow with mast, sail, and lee-boards, that she could sail on a wind.

Mr. Welch, having finished his visit, now came over to bid Ben and his wife good by. He had acquired so much strength during his stay that he pulled the canoe over to the island himself. He expressed a strong desire to see Uncle Isaac; accordingly Ben sent the boys over after him, charging them not to come back without him.

The old gentlemen were mutually pleased with each other. As they all sat on the broad stone at the front door, enjoying the cool of the evening and the prospect, Mr. Welch persuaded Uncle Isaac to tell somewhat of his life among the Indians, in which he was very much interested.

"There is one thing which has always puzzled me, Mr. Murch," said Mr. Welch, "and which perhaps you can explain, as you are so familiar with all such matters. When I look at the vast amount of excellent spars and timber there is on this island, so easy of access, and consider the great enterprise of the people here in lumbering, I cannot understand why every stick was not cut off years ago, before I bought it."

"It's an old story, Mr. Welch, and forgotten now; but it is because it was said to be haunted."

"Haunted!" said all in a breath.

Charlie, at this, crawled in between Uncle Isaac's knees.

"Yea," he went on to say, "at times in easterly weather, or a southerly blow, a terrible groaning was heard, as though a person with their throat cut was trying to scream, always in one spot, between the eastern point and the Little Bull, and it's all washed away now. A vessel, with four men in her, rode out a gale of wind under the lee of the island. After she went away, a grave was found there: it was judged they had murdered one of their number. Some folks, who were on there, said they saw a man walking right on the tops of the bulrushes and flags, without bending them, holding his hand to his throat, which was cut from ear to ear, and making a sort of gurgling noise. A vessel from Mount Desert, with a dare-devil for a skipper, went there to get wood and water; but they heard the noise terribly. At the first stroke of the axe, a shower of stones, thrown by invisible hands, came out of the woods; they cut their cable, and ran out to sea as fast as the wind could carry them, and the water-casks lay there till they rotted."

"But," said Mr. Welch, "why should it not be heard now?"

"That's telling," said Uncle Isaac, with a comical look.

"Do tell us," said Charlie, who had almost crawled into Uncle Isaac's mouth.

"How can it be, when the ground is all washed away, and the place all under water?"

"O, that ain't the reason."

"Well," continued the old man, "the sea had beat a great hole out of the bank, and in easterly weather, or whenever there was much swell, the sea broke into it. About the time this man was buried, — who, I suppose, was some sailor, who had died of small pox, — a great oak on the top of the bank blew up. When it went, the main root drew out of the ground and made a hole that ran into the large one, and the sea, breaking in, would drive the air before it out of the small hole, like the wind from the nose of the bellows; and the noise caused by this could be easily magnified by a timid person into a groan. After the land washed away the noise ceased, and the whole matter was forgotten."

"How did you know all this?" said Ben.

"Your father found it out; but he kept it all to himself, because he had the care of the island, and it kept people from stealing timber, and saved him the trouble of watching it. A thousand men couldn't have guarded the island half as well."

"'Twas a capital thing for my timber," said Mr.

Welch. "I'm much obliged to that hole in the bank."

"It was a good thing for you in the way of a bargain," was the reply; "for your father couldn't have bought it for four times the money it cost him, if it hadn't been for this silly story."

"Mr. Rhinea, how large is the island you have bought?" asked the merchant.

"Three hundred acres."

"Is it timbered?"

"Half of it is, with oak and pine; the other part is cleared and excellent pasture, and there is a deal of marsh and natural meadow. I bought it principally for the hay and pasture of sheep and cattle that I use occasionally, or young stock."

"What do you intend to do with this land from which you are now cutting the growth?"

"I intend to burn it over, and set out an orchard right among the ashes."

"Then I want to make you a present of the trees."

"Indeed, sir; you couldn't do me a greater favor."

"How shall I get them to you?"

"When the ground is ready, I'll come up in the schooner and get them. I can take a load of

wood or lumber to Salem or Boston to pay expenses."

They now parted with mutual good wishes, and Ben sent over Fred a very handsome present in money, above his wages, as he was prevented from going with the other boys on their holiday.

Uncle Isaac and the merchant went over in the same canoe, and Uncle Isaac took the oars to row; but Mr. Welch insisted upon pulling one oar, having laid aside his gold-headed cane, his wig, and three-cornered hat for one of more moderate size, and exchanged his broadcloth and fine linen for breeches of fulled cloth and a sailor's shirt.

Ben went on a mackerel cruise, and Uncle Isaac, hiring a man to tend his fish flake, went too, leaving the boys to chop and get in the harvest.

Everything now conspired to make the time pass pleasantly with Charlie. He not only experienced the heartfelt satisfaction which arises from the conscious discharge of duty and the approbation of those he loved, but the season had also proved propitious, and the land, that he and his companions had so faithfully tilled, was laden with an abundant harvest. Not a stump was visible on the burn from without, so completely were they hidden by the rank vegetation. Upon going amongst it, one

beheld a singular sight: the boys had put in a liberal allowance of pumpkin seeds, and the vines, to enjoy the sun,—of which the thick corn deprived them,—had run up and wreathed around the stumps, and large pumpkins, one side green and the other yellow, were hanging from the sides of great charred stumps, or lying between their forked roots. There were additional sources of happiness more private in their nature: Charlie's pets had all done well; he had raised fifty ducks from the pair Fred gave him, by keeping the duck laying, and setting her eggs under hens. Charlie took great delight in seeing them, night and morning, going to or coming from the water, following their leader in Indian file; his wild gander and tame goose had reared four goslings.

There was a great deal of pleasurable excitement to the boys in getting in the first harvest that ever grew on Elm Island, and which was the fruit of their own labor.

While Charlie was making a couple of flails, John went over to his father's, and brought off several bushels of apples. They put a whole lot in the haymow to eat while they were threshing the rye. Elm Island now began to wear the appearance of a farm; the flails were going merrily in

the barn, and flax was spread on the grass to rot. The lowing of cattle, and the noise of hens and ducks were heard on all sides; but they were especially delighted when they began to dig the potatoes, and the great tubers rolled out of the hills at every touch of the hoe; every few moments one would be crying out to the other, "Only see what a hill I've got — ain't they bouncers!"

"Don't those look good?" said Charlie, pointing to the long rows of great potatoes drying in the sun, between the hills; for they had put two rows in one.

Great was their satisfaction when they found that the cellar, which was under only a part of the house, would not hold all the potatoes, and that a hole must be dug beyond the reach of frost to contain the remainder.

"That is better than running over to the store every little while after potatoes," said Charlie; "we shan't have to sell all the eggs, chickens, and nice codfish, and everything the hogs won't eat, and eat hake ourselves. I don't believe I shall eat as many clams this winter as I did last: there's two good grunTERS in the sty, and a fat duck won't go amiss; we shan't have to go away at Thanksgiving, in order to get anything good to eat, and

have nothing to give Uncle Isaac but a baked coon. Not that a baked coon is to be despised. When I was over to your house last fall, John, and saw the great yellow ears of corn bursting out of the husks, I thought, O, if I could only see such a field of corn on the island! and now here it is, grown right up among the old black stumps. In England they wouldn't think of trying to grow grain on such rough ground."

Charlie had not, as yet, found an opportunity of using many of the tools he had purchased in Boston; but now an occasion presented itself, as the corn was not yet fit to harvest, the other crops were secured, and they had cleared all the land Ben told them to.

"John," said he, "let's build a corn-house; we must have one, and there are small timbers, boards, shingles, and nails enough that were left of the barn."

"Do you believe we could do it?"

"Yes. I know I can frame one just like Uncle Isaac's. Come and see."

John followed him to the workshop in the barn, when Charlie drew out from under the bench a frame of a building eighteen inches long and twelve wide, and complete in every part.

"There," said Charlie, "that is just the proportions of Uncle Isaac's corn-house — the scale of one fourth of an inch to a foot."

"Now, Charlie, I should like to know when you made this."

"O, ever so long ago. I made the frame before you and Fred came on, and the door after you went home."

Charlie now asked consent of his mother to build the corn-house, which she freely gave, saying, she had not the least doubt they could do it, and thought Ben would be much pleased; she also promised to get paint to paint the door and trimmings, which pleased Charlie much.

When everything was ready for raising, Sally helped them, and it stood true and firm.

As it was only two o'clock, he and John went gunning, the rest of the day, over to Griffin's Island, taking Sailor with them. For several days the boys worked very busily to complete their corn-house, and when it was done and painted, it looked very pretty.

"We ought to have a vane," said John; "what shall it be?"

"A duck," said Charlie.

"A duck! Who ever heard of such a thing as

that for a vane!" and John burst into a roar of laughter. "I'd sooner pull a feather out of a goose, and stick that up."

"Well, what would you have?"

"I've got a toy ship, that father made me, about fifteen inches long; let's put a wooden spanker to that, to make her keep head to the wind, and take her."

They went over to get her. Captain Rhines's curiosity was excited, and he came over to see the corn-house, and was so much pleased with it, that he said,—

"I wouldn't take this thing; 'twill blow all to pieces in a month. I'll make you one." So he went into the shop, and made a fore-and-aft schooner of board edgewise, bored into the edge, and put in the masts and a mainsail of wood. Charlie made a long mast to mount it on, and Captain Rhines helped them put it up in fine style.

"Now I do hope just one thing," said Charlie; "and that is, that father won't come home in the night; but I'll warrant he will."

"No, he won't," cried John from the ridge-pole of the corn-house, where he was driving the last nail into the vane staff; "there's a fore-and-aft schooner steering for the island, and I'm almost sure it's the *Perseverance*."

"Get the glass," said the captain.

"They've carried it with them," said Charlie; "let's get up in the tall pine."

"It's her," shouted the boys from the top of the pine. Sally, being advised of the fact, soon had a noble meal in progress, being amply supplied with material from the hen-yard and garden, and large pewter platters of blackberries graced each end of the table.

The Perseverance came rapidly on with her sheets off, and Captain Rhines and the boys sat down on a bank to wait for her arrival.

"I happened here in just the right time," said the captain, "to see Ben, get a good supper, and take Uncle Isaac home with me."

"I wonder what they'll think the corn-house is," said Charlie; "father'll be more surprised than he was about the hay."

"I guess," said John, "he'll want to go right off again, he fares so well when he's away."

The crew could now be seen, all collected forward, except the helmsman, and taking turns looking through the glass.

The boys were proud and happy when the crew came ashore, and marched up in front of the building. Uncle Sam, after looking it over, said, "That

is as handsome a piece of work of the kind as ever I saw, and would do credit to Isaac or anybody else. I call it great."

As this was the longest speech Uncle Sam was ever known to make, the boys appreciated it accordingly.

"I think," said Uncle Isaac to Ben, "you will have to leave the house, and move into the corn-house, for it is altogether the handsomest building on the island."

"What luck, Ben?" inquired the captain.

"First-rate; wet all my salt, might have wet more."

They now sat down to a bountiful meal, mutually happy, the boys proud of their summer's work, and the crew of their good luck. Ben rejoiced to be at home and at liberty to work on the land.

After the mackerel were taken out, the *Perseverance* was hauled up for the winter, and John returned home, promising Charlie he would be on at the husking.

Ben and Charlie now gathered in the corn, and invitations were sent out for the husking. It was fully attended, as all wanted to see what Ben would do in respect to liquor, and whether he would dare to come out publicly.

When they were all assembled, Ben said, "You know, neighbors, it has always been the custom to have spirit at huskings, and all kind of doings; but in view of what happened in the spring, I have been led to think more seriously of the matter, and have made up my mind that it is my duty neither to drink spirit myself nor give it to others."

"You are making an ass of yourself, Ben," said his father; "rum's as good as ever it was; it's the abuse that leads to trouble; as the minister said last Sabbath, 'fire and water are both good as servants, but are terrible masters;' rum is good if it don't get the upper hands. I've drank spirit sixty years, and it has never hurt me."

"I'm sixty-five," said Uncle Jonathan Smullen, "and this is the first dry husking I was ever at, and I guess 'twill be the last."

"When a man begins to grow covetous," said Joe Bradish, "and is too mean to —" Here he received a thump on the back from Joe Griffin, that knocked the breath out of him, and compelled him to sit down.

"Shut up," said Joe; "everybody knows better than that."

All eyes were now turned upon Uncle Isaac, and Captain Rhines, who had not the least doubt but

he would be of the same opinion as himself, called for his ideas.

“Well, neighbors,” said the old philosopher, “I have always been in the habit of using spirit from boyhood, and my father before me, and there’s not a man living who ever saw me the worse for liquor. I don’t take any more now than I did forty years ago; I jest kiver the bottom of the glass, and drink it clear; but I have noticed this — people that are younger, drink more than people that are older, Captain Rhines, Uncle Sam, myself, and others, don’t abuse ourselves, but those that are coming on do, and Sam Yelf and John Strout are not the only ones that have died in consequence of liquor; and I don’t know what it’s coming to; it’s time something was done. I’ve heard people say that a man can’t bear fatigue and exposure without rum, but I know better. I know I can bear more fatigue when I am in the woods, where I can’t get it, than when I’m where I can; there are no people on this earth can bear what an Indian can, and they never knew what rum was till we gave it to them; and it’s killing them like sheep. I don’t say it’s not good for medicine, or to wash a sheep, or a horse’s foot; but I think it is better to go *too* far, than not far enough, and I approve of Ben’s way, and shall go with him.”

"And I," said Joe Griffin and Seth Warren.

"If anybody," said Ben, who had heard Joe Bradish's remark, "thinks I do it because I am mean, I will say, it used to cost me about twenty-five dollars a year for liquor; and I will give that much yearly to the widow Yelf, who is poor, as long as she lives."

"Now I guess you feel well," said Joe Griffin to Joe Bradish, "you low-lived thing you."

Captain Rhines was astonished, but it would not do to impeach Uncle Isaac's wisdom, for half the neighborhood believed that the sun rose and set in him.

At this juncture who should get up but Flour!

"I tink," said the black, "dat ole Flour, he knows someting about drinking rum. When dis nigger buy all de rum he could get, he hab no clothes, chill'un no clothes, no bread in de house, fight wid de ole woman ebery day. I promise Massa Isaac, on board de Ark, I try not drink rum. I hab tried; dis summer I drink bery leetle; now I hab clothes, bread in house, and money laid up; no kick my ole woman. Me tink drinking leetle rum so much good, drinking none better still."

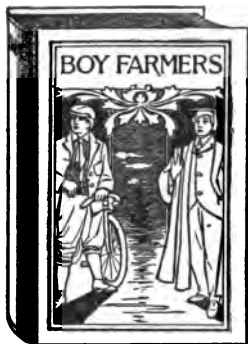
No reply was made to this, and Charlie, Fred, and John, seizing Flour, marched him to the great

maple to administer the auger pledge. Uncle Jonathan Smullen went home sober for the first time since he was twenty-one.

The next volume, "THE YOUNG SHIP-BUILDERS OF ELM ISLAND," will manifest more fully the effect of putting weight upon youthful shoulders, and the rapidity with which character develops under pressure and the spur of necessity; when the orphan boy, who once wandered about the wharves of St. John, not knowing where to get his bread, gives bread to hundreds on sea and land; while the three boys, who first united in the humble business of selling baskets, not only acquired wealth, and were enrolled among those who laid the foundations of our mercantile prosperity, became temperate, when abstinence was considered a sin against society and good fellowship, but also becoming sincerely religious, gave weight to their sentiments by a worthy example.

AMERICAN BOYS' SERIES

Ninety copyright books for boys by noted American Authors



The books selected for this series are all thoroughly American, by such favorite American authors of boys' books as Oliver Optic, Elijah Kellogg, P. C. Headley, Captain Farrar, George M. Towle, and others, now made for the first time at a largely reduced price, in order to bring them within the reach of all. Each volume complete in itself.

UNIFORM CLOTH BINDING NEW COVER
DESIGN ILLUSTRATED Price per volume
\$1.00

1. **Adrift in the Ice Fields** By Capt. Chas. W. Hall
2. **All Aboard, or Life on the Lake** By Oliver Optic
3. **Ark of Elm Island** By Elijah Kellogg
4. **Arthur Brown the Young Captain** By Elijah Kellogg
5. **Boat Club, The, or the Bunkers of Rippleton** By Oliver Optic
6. **Boy Farmers of Elm Island, The** By Elijah Kellogg
7. **Boys of Grand Pré School** By Prof. James DeMille
8. **"B. O. W. C.," The** By Prof. James DeMille
9. **Brought to the Front, or the Young Defenders** By Elijah Kellogg
10. **Burying the Hatchet, or the Young Brave of the Delawares** By Elijah Kellogg
11. **Cast Away in the Cold** By Dr. Isaac I. Hayes
12. **Charlie Bell the Waif of Elm Island** By Elijah Kellogg
13. **Child of the Island Glen** By Elijah Kellogg
14. **Crossing the Quicksands** By Samuel W. Cozzens
15. **Cruise of the Casco** By Elijah Kellogg
16. **Fire in the Woods** By Prof. James DeMille
17. **Fisher Boys of Pleasant Cove** By Elijah Kellogg
18. **Forest Glen, or the Mohawk's Friendship** By Elijah Kellogg
19. **Good Old Times** By Elijah Kellogg

LEE AND SHEPARD Publishers BOSTON

AMERICAN BOYS' SERIES — Continued

20. ✓ **Hardscrabble of Elm Island** By Elijah Kellogg
21. **Haste or Waste, or the Young Pilot of Lake Champlain**
By Oliver Optic
22. **Hope and Have** By Oliver Optic
23. **In School and Out, or the Conquest of Richard Grant** By
Oliver Optic
24. ✓ **John Godsoe's Legacy** By Elijah Kellogg
25. **Just His Luck** By Oliver Optic
26. ✓ **Lion Ben of Elm Island** By Elijah Kellogg
27. **Little by Little, or the Cruise of the Flyaway** By Oliver
Optic
28. **Live Oak Boys, or the Adventures of Richard Constable**
Afloat and Ashore By Elijah Kellogg ✓
29. **Lost in the Fog** By Prof. James DeMille
30. **Mission of Black Rifle, or On the Trail** By Elijah
Kellogg ✓
31. **Now or Never, or the Adventures of Bobby Bright** By
Oliver Optic
32. **Poor and Proud, or the Fortunes of Kate Redburn** By
Oliver Optic
33. **Rich and Humble, or the Mission of Bertha Grant** By
Oliver Optic
34. **Sophomores of Radcliffe, or James Trafton and His Boston**
Friends By Elijah Kellogg ✓
35. **Sowed by the Wind, or the Poor Boy's Fortune** By Elijah
Kellogg ✓
36. **Spark of Genius, or the College Life of James Trafton** By
Elijah Kellogg ✓
37. **Stout Heart, or the Student from Over the Sea** By Elijah
Kellogg ✓
38. **Strong Arm and a Mother's Blessing** By Elijah Kellogg ✓
39. **Treasure of the Sea** By Prof. James DeMille
40. **Try Again, or the Trials and Triumphs of Harry West** By
Oliver Optic
41. **Turning of the Tide, or Radcliffe Rich and his Patients** By
Elijah Kellogg ✓
42. **Unseen Hand, or James Renfrew and His Boy Helpers** By
Elijah Kellogg ✓

LEE AND SHEPARD Publishers BOSTON

AMERICAN BOYS' SERIES — Continued

43. **Watch and Wait, or the Young Fugitives** By Oliver Optic
44. **Whispering Pine, or the Graduates of Radcliffe** By Elijah Kellogg ✓
45. **Winning His Spurs, or Henry Morton's First Trial** By Elijah Kellogg ✓
46. **Wolf Run, or the Boys of the Wilderness** By Elijah Kellogg ✓
47. **Work and Win, or Noddy Newman on a Cruise** By Oliver Optic
48. **Young Deliverers of Pleasant Cove** By Elijah Kellogg
49. **Young Shipbuilders of Elm Island** By Elijah Kellogg
50. **Young Trail Hunters** By Samuel W. Cozzens
51. **Field and Forest, or the Fortunes of a Farmer** By Oliver Optic
52. **Outward Bound, or Young America Afloat** By Oliver Optic
53. **The Soldier Boy, or Tom Somers in the Army** By Oliver Optic
54. **The Starry Flag, or the Young Fisherman of Cape Ann** By Oliver Optic
55. **Through by Daylight, or the Young Engineer of the Lake Shore Railroad** By Oliver Optic
56. **Cruises with Captain Bob around the Kitchen Fire** By B. P. Shillaber (Mrs. Partington)
57. **The Double-Runner Club, or the Lively Boys of Rivertown** By B. P. Shillaber (Mrs. Partington)
58. **Ike Partington and His Friends, or the Humors of a Human Boy** By B. P. Shillaber (Mrs. Partington)
59. **Locke Amsden the Schoolmaster** By Judge D. P. Thompson ✓
60. **The Rangers** By Judge D. P. Thompson ✓
61. **The Green Mountain Boys** By Judge D. P. Thompson ✓
62. **A Missing Million, or the Adventures of Louis Belgrave** By Oliver Optic
63. **A Millionaire at Sixteen, or the Cruise of the "Guardian Mother"** By Oliver Optic
64. **A Young Knight Errant, or Cruising in the West Indies** By Oliver Optic
65. **Strange Sightings Abroad, or Adventures in European Waters** By Oliver Optic

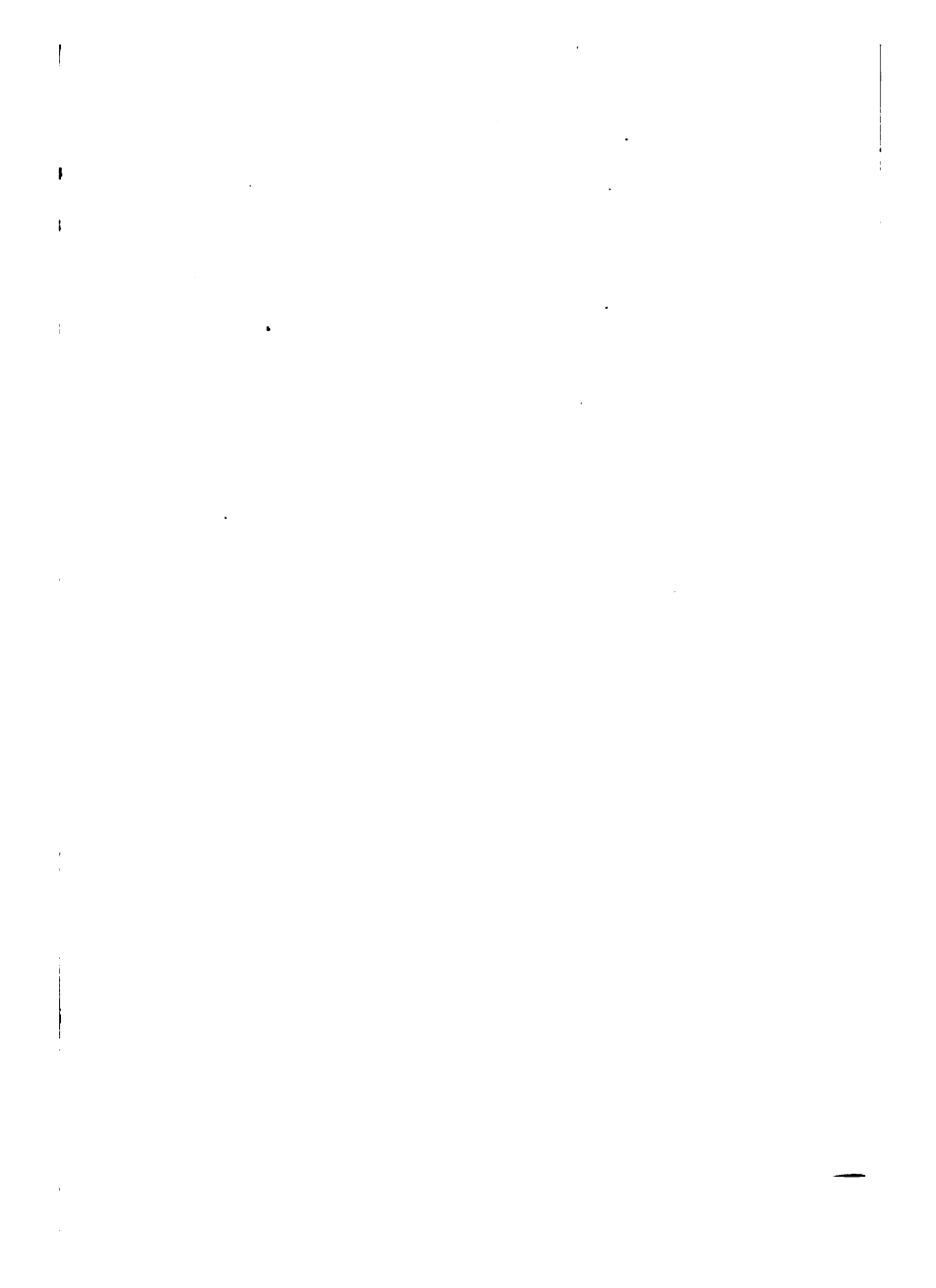
AMERICAN BOYS' SERIES — Continued

66. **Facing the Enemy** The Life of Gen. Wm. Tecumseh Sherman By P. C. Headley
67. **Fight It Out on This Line** The Life and Deeds of Gen. U. S. Grant By P. C. Headley
68. **Fighting Phil** The Life of Gen. Phillip Henry Sheridan By P. C. Headley
69. **Old Salamander** The Life of Admiral David G. Farragut By P. C. Headley
70. **Old Stars** The Life of Gen. Ormsby M. Mitchell By P. C. Headley
71. **The Miner Boy and His Monitor** The Career of John Ericsson, Engineer By P. C. Headley
72. **The Young Silver Seekers** By Samuel W. Cozzens
73. **Drake the Sea King of Devon** By George Makepeace Towle
74. **Flagellan, or the First Voyage around the World** By George Makepeace Towle
75. **Marco Polo, His Travels and Adventures** By G. M. Towle
76. **Pizarro, His Adventures and Conquests** By George M. Towle
77. **Raleigh, His Voyages and Adventures** By George M. Towle
78. **Vasco da Gama, His Voyages and Adventures** By George Makepeace Towle
79. **The Heroes and Martyrs of Invention** By George M. Towle
80. **Live Boys, or Charlie and Nasho in Texas** By Arthur Morecamp
81. **Live Boys in the Black Hills** By Arthur Morecamp
82. **Down the West Branch** By Capt. C. A. J. Farrar
83. **Eastward Ho!** By Capt. C. A. J. Farrar
84. **Up the North Branch** By Capt. C. A. J. Farrar
85. **Wild Woods Life** By Capt. C. A. J. Farrar

NEW TITLES ADDED IN 1903

86. **Child of the Tide** By Mrs. E. D. Cheney
87. **The Boys of Thirty-Five** By E. H. Elwell
88. **Perseverance Island** By Douglas Frazar
89. **Going West** By Oliver Optic
90. **Little Bobtail** By Oliver Optic

LEE AND SHEPARD Publishers BOSTON



Vertical line on the right side of the page.

4

—

